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Cyril of Scythopolis and the monasteries of the Palestinian desert.

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CYRIL OF SCYTHOPOLIS
AND THE MONASTERIES OF THE PALESTINIAN DESERT

by John Elliott-Binns

1989

submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

registered at King's College London



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ABSTRACT

This study examines the distinctive features of the monastic life of the Palestinian desert as described by the writings of the main contemporary source, the Lives of Cyril of Scythopolis.

Cyril was born in the city of Scythopolis, a provincial capital and a commercial centre with a strong Christian Church much influenced by monastic culture. He left the city as a young man and lived the rest of his life as a monk in the desert near Jerusalem.

The Lives are carefully constructed, drawing on a variety of sources; ascetical writings available in the monasteries, the oral traditions of the desert, documents held in archives, the chronographical tradition, inscriptions and his own experience of monastic life.

The monasticism described grew up in a small but geographically varied stretch of desert. The environment allowed different forms of monastic life including large coenobia, scattered laurae and a wandering solitary life. The city of Jerusalem attracted pilgrims which were a source of recruits and revenue. They also prevented the monasteries becoming isolated.

The growth of the monasteries from informal groups of ascetics into large and complex institutions with influence in the City of Jerusalem and the Imperial Court at Constantinople is shown by a comparison of Cyril's two main Lives, of Euthymius and Sabas. This growth is seen as a part of God's plan and miracles play an important part in Cyril's writing. The power of God is made available to the people by the saint as a result of his ascetic life.

The struggle against heresy was not only a witness to truth but also an aspect of the growth of the monasteries. Heretical groups flourished as a result of the distinctive characteristics of monastic life. The Council of Constantinople of 553 is presented as the triumph of orthodox faith.

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Abbreviations.

References to the Lives of Cyril of Scythopolis are to the edition of E. Schwartz, Kyrillos von Skythopolis, TU 49/2 (Leipzig 1939). They refer to the page and line of that edition, thus (0.0).

References to periodicals use the abbreviations given in the Theologische Realenzyklopädie, Abkürzungsverzeichnis (Berlin, New York New York 1976).

Other works are referred to with clarity rather than consistency in mind. So, the English title is generally used in the text (thus, Life of Antony) but the Latin title in abbreviation in citations in the foot-notes (thus, VAnton). If the secondary literature consistently uses the Latin title, then that title is used in the text as well (thus, Leontius of Byzantium, Contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos).

Abbreviations of works, as opposed to periodicals, used in the foot-notes are as follows:

ACO	Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum
ApophPatr	Apophthegmata Patrum
HE	Ecclesiastical History
HMon	Historia Monachorum
HRel	Theodoret, <u>Religious History</u>
ItinAeth	Itinerarium Aetheriae
Kyrillos	Schwartz, E. <u>Kyrillos von Skythopolis</u>
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
MartP	Eusebius of Caesarea, <u>Martyrs of Palestine</u>
MH	Flusin, F. <u>Miracle et histoire dans l'oeuvre de Cyrille de Scythopolis</u>
MO	Festugière, A-J. <u>Les Moines d'Orient</u>
Ovadiah	Ovadiah, A. <u>A Corpus of the Byzantine Churches in the Holy Land</u> (the number following refers to the section and not to the page)
Prat	John Moschus, <u>Spiritual Meadow</u>
SC	Sources Chrétiennes

Vailhé	Vailhé, S. Répertoire Alphabétique des monastères de Palestine' (the number following refers to the section and not to the page).
VAnton	Athanasius. <u>Life of Antony</u>
VDanStyl	<u>Life of Daniel the Stylite</u>
VHyp	<u>Life of Hypatius</u>
VPach Bo	<u>Life of Pachomius, Bohairic Life</u>
VPach G ¹	<u>Life of Pachomius, First Greek Life</u>
VPorph	<u>Life of Porphyry</u>
VThds	<u>Life of Theodosius</u>
VThecl	<u>Life of Thecla</u>

Introduction.

We do not know when Cyril was born or when he died, but passages from his writings enable these dates to be calculated with a fair degree of certainty. When Sabas visited Scythopolis for the first time, in 518, Cyril's father and mother were resident in the city but no mention is made of Cyril.¹ Then twelve years later, when the saint made his second visit, Cyril describes himself as a boy (ἐμὲ δὲ παῖδα ὄντα).²

His renunciation of the world and acceptance of the monastic life must have taken place in 543, since he went to Jerusalem in the November of the same year to be present at the consecration of Justinian's 'Nea' Church of the Mother of God, an event which can be dated precisely.³ A similar event is recorded in the life of Cyriac, when the saint leaves his home and travels to Jerusalem to start his monastic career, and here we are told that Cyriac was eighteen years old.⁴ If this passage contains an echo of Cyril's own experience, then Cyril was eighteen in 543 and five in 530 when he met Sabas. 525 is the most likely date for his birth.

Cyril was alive in 558. This is the latest date to be mentioned in the Greek manuscripts of his writings. In this year John the Hesychast was 104 and Cyril completed John's life by recording this fact and praying that he may "complete his course in peace".⁵ A Georgian manuscript of the Life, copied in the eleventh century at the Monastery of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem and preserved today in the British Museum, includes an account of John's death which, it says, took place on Wednesday, 8th January. This combination of date and day of the week occurred in 559. G. Garitte argues for the authenticity of this addition both because its style resembles that of Cyril and also because

1. 164. 20 - 24.

2. 180.9.

3. 71.11-20. For a full contemporary account of the building, Procopius, *Buildings* 5.6. 1-12 (LCL VII, pp.342-348).

4. 224.9. For parallels between Cyril's own life and the lives of his subjects, see below p.96.

5. 222. 10-14.

it was copied in Jerusalem, while most of the Greek manuscripts originated in Syria or Italy.¹ It is likely that this Georgian text preserves an addition made by Cyril which was not included in the texts used by later Greek copyists. Cyril was a prolific writer and the most likely explanation for the sudden end of his literary activity is his death. This probably took place in 559 or 560.

His life falls into two almost equal parts. The first eighteen years of his life was spent in the city of Scythopolis and lasted from 525 to 543. He then moved to the Judaeian desert where he lived until his death in 559 or 560. There is no evidence that he ever travelled outside these two areas.

Cyril's upbringing and education took place in Scythopolis. The culture and way of life of this urban society was the environment in which his personality was formed. In order to understand Cyril and his writings, we have to build up a picture of the city which formed him.

1. G. Garitte, 'Le mort de S. Jean Hesychaste d'après un texte georgien inédit', An Boll, 72 (1954) 75-84.

Chapter One.

SCYTHOPOLIS.

1 : 1. The importance of the City.

The reason for the importance of the city of Scythopolis or Beth-Shan, as it has been known for most of its history, is its geographical position. It stands at the meeting point of the valleys of the Jordan and the Jalud, or Harod. The Jordan flows from Mount Hermon in the north of Palestine to the Dead Sea, and the valley in which it lies continues south to the Red Sea. Alongside it ran the ancient trade route, the Way of the King, along which goods transported by sea to the Red Sea ports travelled to Syria and Asia. The valley of the Harod connects the Jordan valley with the Mediterranean coast, joining the valley of Jezreel about fifteen miles west of Beth-Shan. Alongside the Mediterranean coast ran the other ancient road, the Way of the Sea. On this road commodities travelled to and from Africa. Beth-Shan was at the junction of the Way of the King and a main branch route connecting with the Way of the Sea.¹

The importance of the site of Beth-Shan is emphasised by its central position in the network of roads built by the Romans. A plan of the Roman Roads of Palestine can be constructed with the aid of milestones which have been discovered.² Important roads led from Scythopolis into Arabia through Pella and Gerasa; to Damascus in Syria; and to the Mediterranean port of Ptolemais through the garrison town of Legio. Scythopolis was at a junction from which subsidiary roads connected the two main road systems based on the coastal road (which was extended to Jerusalem) and the Arabian roads, a system which had emerged from the ancient Way of the Sea and the Way of the King.³

1. See F - M. Abel, Géographie de la Palestine, 3rd edn (Paris 1967) pp 103, 217-220, 224.
2. See Abel, Geographie, pp 222-231; M. Avi-Yonah, 'The Development of the Roman Road System in Palestine', IEJ 1(1950-1) 54-60
3. Avi-Yonah, 'Development of the Roman Road System' (pp 56-59).

The neighbourhood of Beth-Shan was noted for its agricultural productivity. Polybius, in his account of the campaigns of Antiochus III in 218, states that the two cities of Scythopolis and Philoteria could easily provide everything necessary for the nourishment of the entire army.¹ In the third century A.D. Rabbi Simeon ben Lakhish was lavish in his praise of the fertility of the city. "If Paradise is situated in the land of Israel its entrance is Beth-Shan".² At the start of the fifth century, Origenist monks fleeing from Egypt chose to settle at Beth-Shan because the plentiful palmtrees could provide them with the raw materials for their trade of manufacturing rope and baskets.³ In addition to dates, the valley produced rice, olives, corn, flax and sugar cane. Excavation has also shown that sesame seed was grown as early as 1300 B.C.⁴

Rainfall in the region around Beth-Shan is erratic, since it is situated at the edge of the vast expanse of desert stretching east into Gilead and south into the Negev. Recent records show a variation in precipitation from one third to twice the average rainfall. Drought is frequent yet, in spite of this irregular pattern of rainfall, a plentiful and consistent supply of water is assured from over thirty natural springs in the neighbourhood. It is calculated that these produce over 130 million cubic metres per annum, which is sufficient to irrigate the whole region.⁵

D. Sperber has analysed the evidence for agricultural yields in Palestine which show that the high levels of productivity in the first century A.D. declined sharply from the mid second century until the end of the third century. After 350 A.D. yields improved.⁶

1. Polybius, 5.70.4 (LCL III, p172). This is the first occurrence of the name, Scythopolis.
2. Babylonian Talmud, Erubbin 19a. The rabbi's enthusiasm is partly due to his desire to halt the drift of Jews into the cities.
3. Sozomen, HE 8.13 (GCS : 336.13-16)
4. A. Rowe, Beth-Shan Topography and History, Palestine section of the University Museum, 1 (Philadelphia 1930) p. 3.
5. For these figures, see the summary of the Proceedings of the 17th Annual Convention of the Israel Exploration Society, IEJ II (1961) 198-9.
6. D. Sperber, Roman Palestine 200-400. The Land. (Ramat-Gan 1978) pp 64-68.

The regular supply of water around Beth-Shan ensured a greater consistency in agricultural production.

The site of the city of Beth-Shan is a mound which rises about 80 metres above the level of the river Harod, the Tell el Husn, or 'Mound of the Fortress'. The steep sides and restricted access, available only along a saddle of raised land to the north-west, make the mound into a natural fortress. The summit offers superb views over the fertile valley of Beth-Shan with its numerous fishponds and over the long sweep of the river Jordan.

Archeological evidence for the early history of this site is plentiful. Beth-Shan lay in the Sultan's private domain until World War I and so remained conveniently free of recent building. This made the site ideal for the excavations carried out between 1921 and 1933 by the University of Pennsylvania Museum. The importance of these excavations is summarised thus: "In scope and conception this was the pioneer excavation in the archeology of Palestine". Much of the early chronology of Palestine have been based on the results.¹ Although about a third of the material discovered remains unpublished, the extensive finds have provided extensive information about the early history of the city.

The excavations uncovered XVIII strata of occupation, the lowest of which is tentatively dated to 3500 B.C. By the early Bronze Age the town consisted of multi-roomed structures and intersecting streets. The first literary reference is in Egyptian Execration Texts from the 19th Century B.C. It was a fortress from which the Pharaohs controlled their Palestinian conquests following Thotmes III's victory over local tribes at Megiddo in 1479 B.C.² In the thirteenth century B.C. Beth-Shan lay in the area which fell to the tribe of Manasseh but the Israelites were not strong enough to drive out the Canaanites.³ By the 11th century the

1. F. James 'Beth-Shean' in M. Avi-Yonah, Encyclopedia of Archeological Excavations in the Holy Land, Vol.1, (London 1975-8.) pp.207-225 (p.209).

2. Rowe, Beth-Shan. pp.10,17.

3. Joshus 17.11; Judges 1.27.

Philistines had occupied the city, and it was on the walls of Beth-Shan that the bodies of Saul and Jonathan were exposed after the battle of Mount Gilboa, provoking the valorous expedition of recovery by the men of Jabesh-Gilead.¹ We can presume that David finally conquered the city, as it appears in the list of towns presided over by Solomon's regional governors.² This long history is an indication of the importance of the city in the ancient world.

When Beth-Shan next appears in the literary records it has been renamed Scythopolis. The earliest references to the new name are in a passage by Polybius and in the Apocryphal book of Judith.³ The name Scythopolis was used in Hellenistic circles but the alternative of Beth-Shan remained in use among Semitic speaking people perhaps in the rural areas around the Hellenised city. The continued use of both names is demonstrated in an inscription on an ossuary found in Jerusalem. Alongside the Judeo-Aramaic 'Ammyiah no-Beshanit' and 'Henin (?) ha-Beshani' is written in Greek 'Ἀμμιά Σκυθοπολίτιδα' and 'Ἄνιν Σκυθοπολίτης'.⁴

The name Scythopolis means City of the Scythians. The Scythians were a group of nomadic tribes who first lived, in Classical times, in what is now South Russia and migrated to the Adriatic coast, now Yugoslavia. The connection between these tribes and a Galilean city has intrigued writers from Eusebius of Caesarea onwards. A recent writer considers that the solution to the problem of the name would solve the problem of the early history of the Hellenised city. "L'explication du nom grec de la ville est sans doute la clé du problème de la date de la fondation".⁵

1. I Samuel 30, 10-12.

2. I Kings 4. 12.

3. Polybius 5. 70. 4 (LCL III. p.174); Judith 3.10

4. J.B. Frey, Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaicarum II (Rome 1952) Nos. 1372-1373, cited in Avi-Yonah, 'Scythopolis' IEJ 12 (1962) 123-134 (p.123)

There have been a wide variety of explanations offered. These are discussed in several recent works, including the articles by M. Avi-Yonah and B. Lifshitz.¹ The most likely suggestion is that of Avi-Yonah who points out that Scythians had a reputation in classical times as horsemen and archers. They served in armies in the Mediterranean area, including that of Ptolemy II. The Scythians who gave the name to the town would have been veterans who settled in the fertile area around Beth-Shan which would provide plentiful grazing for their horses.² Another example of the settlement of veterans of the army is provided by the history of nearby Caesarea where the Emperor Vespasian settled former soldiers when he raised the status of the city to a Roman colony.³

The subsequent history of Scythopolis was turbulent. The city changed hands several times and the composition of its population underwent several alterations. During the Maccabean revolt it seems that the city tried to remain neutral, and so was selected as a convenient place for Jonathan to meet the Seleucid usurper Tryphon.⁴ Antiochus VIII Gryphus used the city as a base from which to attack Samaria,⁵ and it was in turn captured by the Hasmonaeans. The Hellenised citizens preferred to leave their homes rather than become Jews. During the time of Hasmonaean rule Josephus refers to the city as 'deserted', referring to this exodus of the town-dwellers. It was then among those towns restored by Gabinius in 64 B.C.⁶ The inhabitants appear to have continued their attempt to live peacefully. The Jews of Scythopolis sided with their fellow-citizens against Jews in Galilee, and, as the reward for their support, found themselves massacred by their former allies. Josephus tells us that 13,000 perished.⁷ Not surprisingly

1. M. Avi-Yonah, 'Scythopolis', *IEJ* 12(1962)123-134; B. Lifshitz, 'Scythopolis, l'histoire, les institutions et les cultes de la ville à l'époque hellénistique et impériale', *ANRW* 2.8 (Berlin/New York 1977) pp.262-294.
2. Avi-Yonah's attempt to provide a date for the foundation of the city (Autumn 254 B.C.) rests on inadequate evidence and is rejected by Lifshitz in 'Scythopolis' (p.267).
3. L. Levine, *Caesarea under Roman Rule* (Leiden 1975) pp 34-35.
4. Josephus, *Antiquities*, 13, 6, 188 (LCL VII, p.320-1).
5. Josephus, *Jewish War*, 1, 64-7, (LCL, II, p.32)
6. Josephus, *Antiquities*, 14, 87-8 (LCL VII, pp 492-3)
7. Josephus, *Jewish War*, 7, 365. (LCL II, pp 500-502)

Scythopolis was renowned for its anti-Jewish sentiments and was used by Vespasian as his base in his operations against Jewish insurgents in the summer of 64 A.D.¹

Scythopolis received the juridical status of a city under the Seleucid dynasty. Like Ptolemais in Galilee and Philadelphia in Transjordan, it became a Greek polis. This new status brought with it a reorganisation of the city into quarters or 'amphoda'. Inscriptions from the first century A.D. show these amphoda named after products and after the person who was responsible for them or amphodarch.²

The importance of the city increased at the start of the fifth century. The Roman province of Palestine was divided into three separate provinces and Scythopolis became the capital of Palestine II. This tripartite division took place before 409, since it is mentioned in a section of the Theodosian code.³ As a result, Scythopolis became a provincial capital alongside Caesarea, the capital of Palestine I.⁴

In the Roman period, Scythopolis was a major commercial centre. Its water supply, its grazing land and its communications made it especially suited for the textile industry. A fourth century text put it first in the list of cities which supply textiles to the entire world.⁵

1. Josephus, Jewish War: 1.45.7; (LCL II. pp.500-502).

2. See B.Lifshitz. 'Scythopolis (pp.270-271).

3. Codex Theodosianus, 7.4.30. ed. Mommsen (Berlin 1905) p.322. See also Abel, Géographie, pp. 171-178.

4. Caesarea has been the subject of two recent studies, L.Levine, Caesarea under Roman Rule, (Leiden 1975) and J. Ringel, Cesaree de Palestine, (Paris 1975.) These studies depict a city with a history very different to that of Scythopolis. It was a new city, founded between 22 and 9 B.C. which grew to prominence through being a port which gave access to the Mediterranean.

5. "In linteamina sunt hae: Scythopolis, Byblus, Tyrus, Berytus, quae linteamen omni urbi terrarum emittunt, et sunt eminentes in omni abundantia", Expositio Totius Mundi et Gentium, 31.5-8 (SC p.124). The origins of the manufacture of linen in Scythopolis lie deep in antiquity. Loom weights from the thirteenth century BC have been discovered on the tell.

Diocletian's Price Edict lists five local brands of linen - Scythopolitan, Tarsian, Byblian, Laodicene and Tarsian Alexandrian (fabrics in the Tarsian style produced at Alexandria). Products from Scythopolis include "tunics without stripes, dalmatics for men and women, short and tight mantles, short cloaks with hoods for women, kerchiefs and sheets". Each of these is stated to be in the first grade or 'forma' out of three in respect of its quality. The produce of none of the other linen producing cities is rated so highly.¹ An edict of 374 refers to a state linen mill for the manufacture of clothes for the army at Scythopolis, or linyphia, and implies a distinction between 'linteones' (or slaves in the state factory, and 'linyfos' or linen workers. A.H.M. Jones suggests that local guilds of weavers delivered fabrics for finishing to the local factory.²

The occasion of the edict is a situation in which linen workers are leaving the town and settling elsewhere. Fines are imposed on any who harbour these refugees. The conditions of the linen workers were deteriorating and the population was drifting out of the town into the large estates in the surrounding countryside.³

The prominence and prosperity of the Scythopolis in which Cyril grew up was built on trade and industry. A diverse population inhabited the city. The main influences on its urban culture came from four sources - pagan, Jewish, Samaritan and Christian.

1. Price Edict 26.1-28.30, in S. Lauffer, Diokletians Preisedikt (Berlin 1971) pp 169-181.
Compare, for example, the prices of a shirt (στῆλη):

Scythopolis	7,000	6,000	5,000 denarii
Alexandria	4,000	3,000	2,000
2. Codex Theodosianus 2. 20. 8. ed. Mommsen. p.562.
See also A.H.M. Jones, Later Roman Empire, 4 vols. (Oxford 1964) Vol.II pp.836-837.
3. Avi-Yonah, 'Scythopolis' (p.134)

1 : 2. Paganism.

The Hellenistic culture, which was introduced into the city under the Seleucids, influenced all aspects of life. It was to remain dominant until the ascendancy of the Christian Church under Constantine.

Pagan cults were popular and inscriptions have been found which refer to the Deities which were honoured.¹ These include an inscription found on the tell which names the priests of Zeus Olympios-Eubolos son of Epikrates and Herodiclides son of Serapian. The second of these names is Egyptian, which suggests a religious influence from that country.² Among these cults was that of Zeus Olympios. This cult was encouraged by the Seleucids as a means of cementing the unity of the kingdom. The King himself was seen as a manifestation of Zeus Olympios on earth. To it corresponds the cult of Zeus Akraios, referred to in a dedicatory Greek inscription erected by a Roman citizen, L Varius Quirina Proclus in 159 A.D. This god appears to have absorbed a local semitic deity with a name beginning with the letters ~~Βακχ~~ or Βακλ-. Unfortunately the inscription concerned is defaced at this point.³

Another important cult was that of Dionysus. Rowe suggests that the temple on the summit of the tell was dedicated to this deity on the basis of the probability that several archeological finds - including a fragment of the temple frieze, several figurines and the head of a statue - belong to image of this god.⁴ A dedicatory inscription with the name of the god can be dated from the style of writing to the end of the second or beginning of the third centuries, although it appears on an altar used in a fifth or sixth century construction. Other deities appearing in inscriptions are the Dioskouroi, Demeter and Ares Hoplophoros.

1. A. Ovadiah 'Greek Cults in Beth-Shan/Skythopolis in the Hellenistic and Roman periods', Eretz-Israel, 12 (1975) 116-124, in Hebrew with summary in English in SEG 26 (1976) no. 1906; B.Lifshitz, 'Scythopolis' (pp. 273-6).
2. The text of the inscription is in A.Rowe, Beth-Shan, p.45.
3. Lifshitz suggests this reading, following J. and L. Robert, correcting Ovadiah's Zeus Bakchos. Lifshitz "Scythopolis" (p.275)
4. See A. Rowe, Beth-Shan, p.44.

During the period of pagan influence the appearance of the city changed. The summit of the tell became a sacred area and a temple was built at the north-west corner. The date of the building of this temple has been calculated on the basis of a lamp discovered beneath the reservoir underneath the temple. The earlier opinion that lamps of this style were in use from the third century B.C. has been modified, and it is generally considered that the lamp cannot have been in use earlier than the first century A.D. So it is concluded that the temple was built in the first century.¹

The town also grew in size into the valley at the foot of the tell. The walls of this part of the Hellenistic town extended $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles and enclosed one third of a square mile. Among the buildings of this period was the impressive theatre with its seating capacity of 8,000. Coins found in the theatre date from the second and third centuries A.D. suggesting that it was in use during that period. Its life span was remarkably short. By the end of the third century it was falling out of use and the surrounding arcade was destroyed. In the fourth century homes were built over the west gate. The seats are scarcely worn. This deterioration is surprising since theatres were flourishing in other towns.² There was also a hippodrome of which the measurements, according to the English survey, were 92 metres in length and 53 metres in width.³

The influence of pagan culture remained strong until the end of the third century. Thereafter it declined. Inscriptions from Scythopolis testifying to pagan cults all date from the third century or earlier. The theatre was no longer used. This decline was one reason why, in 359, Scythopolis was chosen

1. G.M.Fitzgerald, Beth-Shan Excavations of 1921-1923. The Arab and Byzantine Levels. (Philadelphia 1931) p.33.
2. For an account of the excavations in the theatre, see S. Applebaum's note in IEJ 10 (1960) 126-7, 263-4, The Theatre at Caesarea was in use until the sixth century. See J.Ringel, Cesaree, pp.47-51. since games were connected with religious observance, the use of the theatre implies pagan worship, see Levine, Caesarea, p.57.
3. Conder and Kitchener, Survey of Western Palestine, (London 1882) p.108.

for the infamous trial of those accused of seeking guidance and answers to enquiries from the pagan god Besa. The written questions addressed to the god were discovered in a temple in Abydum in the Thebaid of Egypt. Those convicted were tortured or executed, penalties which were considered by Ammianus Marcellinus as ridiculously strict. Scythopolis was selected as the site of this attack on pagan customs partly because of its convenient location between Alexandria and Antioch and partly because it was secluded ('secretior') which presumably means that it was remote from centres of pagan influence.¹

Paganism may have been declining in the fourth century but it could still re-emerge. Sozomen writes of paganism in towns including Scythopolis in the fourth century. Later chronicles tell of a pagan demonstration breaking the coffin of Patrophilus Bishop of Scythopolis.² The resilience of paganism in nearby towns is shown by the coin finds at the temple of Zeus Hypsistos on Mount Gerizim near Neapolis. They suggest that paganism was strong in the fourth century, but with a gradual decline after the reign of Theodosius I. After 400 it seems that use of the temple died out - perhaps a result of the earthquake in 396.³

In Caesarea, too, classical pagan culture retained its influence. Orion, who lectured before Eudocia prior to her conversion to Christianity, settled there in the fifth century. Here an important influence was the school of rhetoric, legal and literary studies which existed from the third century as a centre for the study of classical culture.⁴

1. The account is in Ammianus Marcellinus, 19.12.12-16. (LCL pp.534-543). Abel, Histoire de la Palestine II, (Paris 1952.) p.276, has misunderstood the passage. He sees the trial as evidence for the extent of paganism, understanding Ammianus to say that the trial brought to light further oracles being sought at Claros, Dodona and Delphi. But Ammianus sees the offences as trifling and the punishments excessive "as if people had been asking advice at these places".
2. Sozomen, HE 7.14, 2-3 (GCS. p.318.) Chronicon Paschale (PG 92: 740)
3. Robert L. Hohlfelder 'A Twilight of Paganism in the Holy Land' in Hohlfelder (ed), City, Town and Countryside in the early Byzantine Era (New York 1982) pp 75-113.
4. For a description of the school see Levine, Caesarea pp. 58-60.

The evidence from these places confirms the view of A.H.M. Jones that paganism appealed mainly to the aristocratic and cultivated on the one hand and to the peasantry on the other.¹ It could be expected to survive longer in rural areas like Mount Gerizim and in cultural centres like Caesarea than in the commercial centre of Scythopolis.

We lack any evidence to suggest that paganism was a vital force in the society of sixth century Scythopolis. The buildings and lay out of the city, however, were constant reminders of the magnificence of the classical and pagan culture which had formed the city in which Cyril lived.

1. Jones, Later Roman Empire, p.940.

1 : 3 The Jewish Community.

The history of the Jewish community in Scythopolis is divided into two phases. The first began in Seleucid times when Jews lived harmoniously alongside the Hellenised townsfolk.¹ This came to an abrupt end in 66 A.D. when 13,000 Jews of Scythopolis were massacred and their goods divided among their killers.²

These accounts, although probably exaggerated, testify to a dramatic reduction in the number of Jews settled in the neighbourhood of Scythopolis.

The date of the reappearance of a Jewish community in the city of Scythopolis is the subject of a disagreement between Avi-Yonah and Lifshitz.³ The city, referred to as Beth-Shan, is mentioned twice in the Mishnah (compiled between 180 and 220 A.D.) Both passages refer to commerce⁴. One allows Jews to buy goods during pagan festivals but only from shops which have not been decorated for the feast. Avi-Yonah assumes that the non-decorated shops belong to Jews and so takes the passage to be evidence for the existence of a Jewish community in Beth-Shan, a city "where on the days of pagan festivals the garlanded shops of non-Jews jostle the undecorated shops of the Jews."⁵ The other reference concerns wine bought by a Jew from a Gentile. Lifshitz objects that not only is there no suggestion that the undecorated shops were owned by Jews but also that the passage is in the context of how Jews can avoid idolatry, in this case in their commercial relationships with Gentiles. So the context demands that both decorated and undecorated shops are owned by non-Jews.⁶ Avi-Yonah also refers to texts in the Talmud which exempted produce from the valley of Beth-Shan from the regulations concerning crops in the Sabbatical year.⁷

1. See 2 Maccabees 12. 29-31.

2. Josephus, Jewish War, 2. 466-76 (LCL, 11, pp.504-9) 7, 365 (LCL, III, p.606). See also Abel, Histoire de la Palestine, II. 7.486

3. Avi-Yonah, 'Scythopolis' (pp.131-2); Lifshitz, 'Scythopolis', pp.284-5.

4. Avodah Zarah 1,11; 4,12.

5. Avi-Yonah, 'Scythopolis' (p.131), with meaning of shops used by Jews, rather than belonging to Jews.

6. Lifshitz, 'Scythopolis' (pp.284-5).

7. Jer.Talmud, Demai 22c; Bab.Talmud 6b.

He suggests that the abolition of the Sabbatical year in the Beth-Shan valley preceded by sixty years or so its abolition elsewhere, and considers this to be a sign of the integration of Jews into a Hellenised urban society.¹ However, the fact of trade between Jews and Gentiles is no indication of a Jewish community in Scythopolis. The city was a trading centre for a wide area and Jews could have come from other parts of Galilee. The early abolition of the Sabbatical year regulations more likely to be a sign of a community small in size and lacking in influence.

The evidence from the third century is clear and unambiguous. A reminiscence of a visit to the Scythopolis synagogue can be dated to the early third century. "R. Samuel b'. Nahman said: I was seated on my grandfather's shoulder going up from my own town to Kefar Hana via Beth-Shean, and I heard R. Simon b. R. Eleazar as he sat and lectured say in R. Meir's name".² The synagogue, presumably the same as the one in which Rabbi Simon lectured, was rebuilt in the time of R. Ammi, at the end of the third century.³

Excavation has discovered the remains of three synagogues which served the Scythopolis community. They were built at times which harmonise with the literary sources. The oldest was constructed in the third or fourth century with a mosaic pavement depicting scenes from the Odyssey laid down a century later. N.Zori who conducted the original excavations in 1964 considered that it was a private house, but subsequent work uncovered inscriptions which leave the identification of the building in little doubt. One, in Aramaic, reads "Remember for good the members of this holy congregation who have laboured for the restoration of this holy place". Similar dedications have been found at synagogues near Jericho and in Tiberias.⁴

1. Avi-Yonah, 'Scythopolis' (p.132).
2. H. Freedman and M.Simon (trans), Midrash Rabbah I Genesis (Bereshith), 1 (London 1939) p.66.
3. Jer. Talmud, Megillah 738.
4. N.Zori, 'The House of Kyrios Leontis at Beth-Shean', IEJ 16 (1966) 123-34. A translation of the inscriptions is given by B. Lifshitz, Donateurs et fondateurs dans les synagogues juives, (Paris 1967) no.77 a-c.

The synagogue with its mosaic motifs derived from classical culture shows how extensively the Jewish community had become integrated into the Hellenistic city.

Other synagogues have been excavated at Tel Mastaba, about 280 metres north of the Byzantine city wall, and at a position near the House of Leontius. The synagogue at Tel Mastaba was founded at the end of the fourth or beginning of the fifth century and was destroyed between 626 and 640. The mosaic floor includes an inscription which reads "the work of Marianos and his son Hanina".¹ These names also occur on an inscription at Beth-Alpha, indicating that these same craftsmen were responsible for both floors. This connection between the synagogues at Tel Mastaba and Beth-Alpha enables them to be dated, since the Beth-Alpha floor contains another inscription which, although it is mutilated at the point where the date is recorded, mentions the Emperor Justin. The floor was laid in the reign of either Justin I (518-527) or Justin II (565-578). The existence of these two synagogues - one within a few yards of the city wall and the other in a village some ten miles away, suggests a thriving and prosperous Jewish community both in the city itself and in the surrounding villages and estates.²

1. Inscription in Lifzhitz, 'Scythopolis' (p.287)
2. Avi-Yonah in 'Scythopolis' (p.134) refers to the building of the Beth-Alpha synagogues as a sign that Jews were migrating out of the city to the estates in the country from the late fourth century. But synagogues were being built in the city as well, showing the presence of Jews there too.

1 : 4. The Samaritan Community.

It has been assumed that there was a large Samaritan community at Scythopolis.¹ This would have resulted from the mobility of the Samaritan population between the mid second and mid third century when they established themselves in many towns as far afield as Jericho, Gaza and Ptolemais.² These communities were often large. In Caesarea they formed the largest minority group, the size of which according to the Talmud was only exceeded by the combined numbers of Jews and Gentiles.³ Clearly the main centre of the Samaritan population was Samaria where there were probably as many as 300,000 Samaritans.⁴

The Samaritans showed a remarkable ability to integrate themselves into contemporary society, particularly through building good relationships with the government of the day. They collaborated with the imperial authorities in the persecution of Christians; are to be found serving in the Roman army and assisted the Romans in putting down the Monophysite revolt.⁵ Some became powerful. Procopius tells of a Samaritan called Arsenius, from Scythopolis, who had "acquired great power and a vast amount of money and had achieved the dignity of the Senate".⁶ The integration of Samaritans into Roman society explains their violent response to imperial legislation threatening their position. The armed revolt of 529-30 does not appear to have been motivated by a desire to return to

1. Report of the 17th Annual Convention of Israel Exploration Society, IEJ, 11 (1961) 198.
2. For Samaritans in Jericho, see Ovadiah, Corpus, p.116; in Gaza and Ptolemais, see Levine, Caesarea, pp.107-9.
3. Talmud, Jer.Demai II.1.22 c. a legal passage in which accuracy was of prime importance. Also Levine, Caesarea, p.107.
4. A figure calculated by M.Avi-Yonah, on the basis of casualties reported in the Samaritan revolts. English summary of article in Hebrew in K.G.Holum, 'Caesarea and the Samaritans' in Hohlfelder, City, Town and Countryside, pp.65-73.
5. For collaboration in persecution, Levine, Caesarea, p.109. For Monophysite revolt, Zachariah of Mitylene, HE 3, 5-6. Hamilton and Brooks (trans), Syriac Chronicle known as that of Zachariah of Mitylene, (London 1899), p.52-3.
6. Procopius, Secret History 27.6. (LCL p.318).

Samaritan customs. Indeed, in most places these seem to have been abandoned already.¹ Instead their revolt was conducted in Roman style and attempted to establish a new government according to accepted Roman traditions. So Malalas reports that their leader was crowned and held chariot races, both of which were Roman symbols of rule.²

The centre of this uprising was Neapolis, the modern Nablus, where the Bishop Mamonas was murdered, although, as Cyril reports, churches were pillaged and burnt, property was burnt, and Christians were tortured and killed over a wide area.³ Samaritans from Scythopolis were involved in the revolt, among whom was a certain Silvanus against whom the Scythopolitan citizens exacted a fearful revenge, burning him alive in the centre of the city. This Silvanus had a son called Arsenius, who had the title ἰλλουστρίος⁴ and exercised considerable influence over Justinian and Theodora.⁴ It is surely correct to identify Cyril's Arsenius with the Arsenius reported by Procopius to be a member of the Senate.⁵ Procopius also tells us that the parents of Arsenius, who still lived in Scythopolis, used their influence against the Christians, which is convincingly explained only as a reference to the part which they played in the Samaritan revolt. This deed of violence caused the Archbishop of Jerusalem Peter to send Sabas on a hasty mission to Constantinople to gain support for the Christian population which had suffered at the hands of the Samaritans, in case Silvanus' powerful son should encourage an opposite response from the Emperor.⁶ When the time came to spend the money allocated to Sabas by Justinian for the purpose of rebuilding the churches destroyed in the uprising, the bishops decided that one out of the twelve "centenaria" should be spent in

1. Rabbi Simeon b. Lakish claimed that Samaritans only adhered to their customs as long as they lived "in their own villages" (J. Pesahim 1.1.276m quoted in Levine, Caesarea, p.109).
2. See Holum, 'Caesarea and the Samaritans'. Compare 172.8:
3. 172.4-9.
4. 172.20 - 173.3.
5. See above p. 23. Although there are some variations between the two accounts, Procopius says that Arsenius annoyed Theodora and was impaled, while Cyril reports that he became a Christian (174.19-22).
6. 173.3-9.

the area around Scythopolis because there had been only limited devastation there. Cyril seems to think this an ungenerous amount. He writes of ἐνὸς καὶ μόνου κερτηναρίου.¹

The episode of the Samaritan revolt suggests that the Samaritans of Scythopolis did not play a large part and that the damage was not great - at least in comparison with other parts of Palestine. The assumption, therefore, of a large Samaritan community at Scythopolis should be modified.

1.5: The Christian Church

The earliest evidence for the existence of the Church in Scythopolis comes from Eusebius' account of the persecutions under Diocletian. The first to be martyred in the wave of persecutions was, according to Eusebius' account, Procopius of the church of Scythopolis although a native of Jerusalem. He was decapitated on 7th July 303. He was an educated man who, when asked to offer libations to the four emperors, responded with a verse from the Iliad, οὐκ ἀγαθὸν πολυκυραννίη, εἷς κέρανος ἔστω. ¹

His responsibilities in Scythopolis included reading the gospels and translating them into Aramaic, as well as exorcising demons. ²

The necessity of Procopius' coming from Jerusalem in order to provide an Aramaic translation of the Scriptures suggests that the earliest Christians in Scythopolis were drawn not from a cultured Hellenistic milieu but were simpler, uneducated Aramaic-speakers. These could well have included workers in the linen trade. This suggestion is supported by the fact that the other martyr from Scythopolis recorded by Eusebius also had an Aramaic name. She was a virgin called Ennathas who was whipped through the streets of Caesarea, then burnt (in November 308). ³ Procopius was remembered beyond Scythopolis. In addition to the chapel dedicated to him at Scythopolis visited by Sabas on his second visit, there was a church dedicated to him at Caesarea which was rebuilt by the Emperor Zeno in 484, and a sanctuary at Constantinople. ⁴

1. "It is not good that there should be many masters, but let there be one master, one king." Iliad. B 204.

2. Eusebius, MartP 1.1-2 (SC. p.122).

3. Eusebius, MartP 9.6-8 (SC. p.149).

Ennathus is a Syrian name, while most of the martyrs commemorated by Eusebius are Greek or Roman.

See G. Bardy, Eusèbe de Césarée, Histoire Ecclesiastique.

SC 55 (Paris 1958) p.149.

4. 108. 8. See H. Delehaye, Les origines du culte des Martyrs. SHG.20, 2nd edn. (Brussels 1933), pp 169, 182-3, 237.

Later in the fourth century the church at Scythopolis was noted for its support of the Arian heresy. The bishop was the educated and powerful Patrophilus. Socrates tells how Eusebius of Emesa had studied the scriptures as a boy at Emesa, and then had travelled to Palestine to learn further from Eusebius of Caesarea and Patrophilus.¹ Eusebius and Patrophilus, as well as Paulinus of Tyre were among Arius' earliest supporters.² Together they dominated the Palestinian Church, and caused the ejection of Maximus, the Bishop of Jerusalem, and installed Cyril in his see.³ This alliance between Caesarea and Scythopolis was continued with Eusebius' successor, Acacius. In 346 a synod of Palestinian bishops welcomed Athanasius on his return to Egypt - but Patrophilus and Acacius were conspicuously absent.⁴ Later Acacius signed a letter to Jovian affirming the Nicene faith - but Patrophilus did not do so.⁵ Patrophilus of Scythopolis can claim the dual honour of being the Palestinian bishop most committed to the Arian cause, and of establishing the church of Scythopolis as a powerful influence within Palestine. The Arian sympathies of Scythopolis could have influenced the Emperor Constantius II in his choice of the city as the place of banishment of Eusebius of Vercellae after he had refused to take part in the condemnation of Athanasius at the Council of Milan in 355.

The increasing influence of the Christian church in Scythopolis was expressed visually when the pagan temple on the summit of the tell was demolished and a large round church was built in its place. This church was excavated by Fitzgerald between 1921 and 1923.⁶ The main body of the structure consisted of two concentric circular walls with an atrium and narthex at the west end and an apse at the east. The church was large and measured from west to east 50.4

1. Socrates, HE, 2.9, (PG 67: 197B)

2. Sozomen, HE, 1.15.11. (GCS. 34.26)

3. Socrates, HE, 2.38. (PG 67: 324 B)

4. Socrates, HE, 2.24. (PG 67: 261 B)

See also Abel, Histoire, II, p.290.

5. Socrates, HE, 3.25. (PG 67: 543C-455A).

6. For a report of the excavations, see G.M. Fitzgerald, Beth-shan Excavations of 1921 - 1923, The Arab and Byzantine Levels. (Philadelphia 1931). pp 18-31. and Ovadiah, Corpus, no.24

metres, including the narthex and apse. The two circular walls were 36.4 metres and 26.4 metres in diameter. The ambulatory formed between these two walls appears to have been roofed, as was the apse, but the central space was open to the sky. The church contained a drainage system, which is an indication that the central area was unroofed and that a means of disposing of rain water was required.¹ The lower part of the walls were faced with marble and the floors covered in mosaic. The church contains columns with capitals in Corinthian style. The church was destroyed sometime before 806. The remains consist of the foundations and some of the building material which was re-used in later Arab constructions.

The date of its construction is unclear. The style of the building is similar to that of the rotunda of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem and the Cathedral at Bostra which dated from the early sixth century. The Corinthian capitals are reminiscent of those in the church of St. Stephen in Jerusalem built by the Empress Eudocia between 431 and 438, although Ovadiah considers that these capitals are older, from the second century, and were re-used.² A construction date in the early fifth century is indicated not only by the resemblances with St. Stephen's but also by similarities between the mosaics and those in the church of Eleona on the Mount of Olives, and the absence of a sacristy, or pastophoria.³

This impressive structure dominated the city. It was approached by a paved street which led from the city gates to the church, symbolically passing over the ruins of the old temple of Dionysus. But it seems that it was not the focus of the Christian community in the time of Cyril.

When Sabas arrived in Scythopolis in late 518 to announce the change in policy of the new Emperor Justin I, the Imperial letters

1. The suggestion, in RB 41(1932) 320-1, that the church had a conical wooden dome is not likely in view of the remains, and evidence for roofless churches in, for example, Caesarea. See Ovadiah, Corpus, no.24

2. Ovadiah, Corpus, no.24

3. Ovadiah, Corpus, no.24

were read out in church. Cyril says, of this occasion: *ἐγὼ οὖν ἐν τῇ ἀρχαίᾳ ἐκκλησίᾳ*.¹ It seems that the bishop's residence was nearby, and that this church was distinguished from the 'new' church up on the hill.

Later, houses were built around the church on the summit and on the terraces below. Some of these were substantial and have been excavated.² Others belonged to poorer people and have left no trace. The Jerusalem Talmud tells us of the houses of Beth-Shan, where the upper ones must be built before the lower ones, lest the former fall down.³ This shift of the population on to the hill is testified to by the Piacenza Pilgrim in the sixth century. "We arrived at the capital city of Galilee. It is called Scythopolis, and stands on a hill."⁴ This change in the nature of the cities in the sixth century occurs elsewhere as well. The open spaces and elegant layout of the classical city was being replaced by houses "huddling round the fortified citadel, enclosing the bishop's palace and the main church".⁵

The Arian allegiance of the church in Scythopolis continued with the two bishops who succeeded Patrophilus. These were Philip and Athanasius, who presided over the church until 380. The Council of Constantinople (381) brought an end to the Arian influence on the church of Scythopolis, as it did in most of the Eastern Empire. Bishop Saturninus participated in the Council. A certain Theodosius was bishop in 404 and Acacius in 431, but little is known of these incumbents of the See.⁶

Bishop Severianus accompanied Juvenal to the Council of Chalcedon and, like Juvenal, gave his support to the Council's Definition of Faith. In 452 he was killed by the followers of the usurping Patriarch Theodosius.⁷

1. 163,1 and 5. Some manuscripts read *ἀρχαία ἁγία*.
2. Fitzgerald, *Beth-Shan Excavations*, pp.4-14.
3. Baba Mezia 12c, cited in Avi-Yonah, *Scythopolis* (p.133).
4. Antoninus Placentinus. 8 (CCL p.133)
5. Averil Cameron, *Procopius and the Sixth Century*, (London 1985.) p.112.
6. See F - M Abel, "Beisan", *RB* 9(1912)409-423 (p.420).
7. *ACO* 2/1 3. pp.132-133.

1 : 6. The influence of monasticism.

Within this Christian city of the fifth and sixth centuries, monasticism was influential. The first monks to arrive in Scythopolis were Origenist refugees from the persecutions of Theophilus. Origenist monks had fled from the Nitrian desert, and about three hundred of them came to Palestine in 400 A.D. Most of these settled in Jerusalem but about eighty, including the celebrated monks Dioscorus and Ammonius, two of the 'Tall Brothers', came to Scythopolis, attracted by the plentiful palm-trees, from the leaves of which they could continue their 'usual trade'.¹ These would have aroused the interest of the Christians of Scythopolis, especially in view of the active part played by Palestinian churchmen in the Origenist disputes of the early fifth century, but their stay in Scythopolis was probably shortlived. In 401 at least some of them continued their wanderings to Constantinople.²

A more lasting influence was provided by Bishop Cosmas who succeeded Olympius, sometime 'after the death of Theoctistus' which took place in September 466.³ Cosmas was one of three brothers, born in Cappadocia and brought up in Syria, who were the first to be received by Euthymius to live the monastic life with him. They could be called the founder-members of his laura at Khan-el-Ahmar. Cosmas was the oldest. He became successively deacon of the Church of the Resurrection and then Guardian of the Cross, or σταυροφύλαξ before being consecrated bishop.⁴ He held this post for thirty years and had a significant influence on the church. Cyril speaks highly of him "οὗτος τοίνυν ὁ μακαρίτης κοσμάς μέγας ἐν τῇ δευτέρᾳ τῶν Παλαιστινίων διέλαμψεν ἐπαρχία...⁵ There is no record of his founding monasteries but he provided a link between Scythopolis and the monastic tradition of the Judaean desert.

1. Sozomen, HE 8,13.1. (GCS 366.13-16)
D.J.Chitty, The Desert a City (London and Oxford 1966) p.58.
2. Sozomen, HE, 8,13.1. (GCS 366.13-16)
3. 55.20.
4. 25.17-21; 32,24-5; 33.31-2.
5. 56.1-3.

This link was strengthened when Sabas spent some time in a cave in the desert near Scythopolis between 500 and 507, after he had left his laura in discouragement at the growing strength of factions opposed to him.¹ He was already known in Scythopolis and it was not long before he was receiving curious visitors from the city and from nearby Gadara.² These included a wealthy man called Basileios who followed the ascetic life under Sabas' guidance. Others joined them, including two robbers who had come to steal Basileios' goods but who decided to become monks after they had first been prevented from carrying out their proposed robbery by two lions and had then been delivered from the lions after calling in prayer for Sabas' aid.³ The settlement was established as a coenobium by an Isaurian named Eumathius. He was succeeded by another Isaurian, Tarasius.⁴

The monastic movement was strengthened by the city's association with John the Baptist. The important pilgrim site of Aenon near Salim, where John baptised, was located eight miles south of Scythopolis. According to Egeria the site was situated in a garden and was reached from the village of Sedima, a statement confirmed by the Madaba mosaic map on which the Aenon is shown to be distant from any major town.⁵ Not far away was an alternative site for John's baptisms, 'Aenon now Sapsaphas' also marked on the Madaba map.⁶ This is probably the place which Antoninus visited. He writes of his visit: "In that part of the Jordan is the spring where St. John used to baptise, and which is two miles from the Jordan, and Elijah was in that valley when the ravens brought him bread and

1. 118. 27-32.

2. Perhaps Sabas had visited Scythopolis in his Lenten travels through the desert, which extended on one occasion through Galilee as far as Parias on the slopes of Mount Herman. 107. 27- 108.15.

3. 119.20-120.3.

4. 120.7-12. See also Vailhé⁴⁵, who gives the foundation date of the monastery as 503, which is possible but not given by Cyril. It is on the east bank of the Jordan at M'Keiss.

5. Itinerarium Aetheriae 13. 2-4 (SC pp.182-4). The Madaba Mosaic Map is dated by Avi-Yonah (Madaba Mosaic Map (Jerusalem 1954) pp 16-18) to 560-5, which makes it almost contemporary with Cyril's writings. For Aenon see p.35.

6. Avi-Yonah, Madaba Mosaic Map, p.37.

meat. The whole valley is full of hermits".¹ John Moschus also refers to hermits living there and to a cave in which John the Baptist appeared to a hermit with some timely advice about his future vocation, although he uses the name Sapsas.² The associations with Elijah and John the Baptist, Biblical figures who inspired the monks, made this an obvious site for an eremetical colony.

The power and protection of John the Baptist was also claimed by the city of Scythopolis. Antoninus Placentinus describes Scythopolis as the place "where Saint John performs many miracles".³ There were several places associated with or dedicated to St. John in Scythopolis. Among a list of signatures in the Acts of the Council of Constantinople of 536 "a deacon and monk of the monastery of St. John" signed "on behalf of all the monks of Scythopolis".⁴ This monastery of St. John's is to be identified with the monastery at Enthemanaith or Enthemane which is in the place dedicated to St. John. According to Cyril of Scythopolis, it was approached by a wide street in the middle of the town with colonnades on either side which is near the 'apse' of St. John. Festugière suggests that this 'apse' of St. John is a circular vaulted building which contained a relic.⁵ Alternatively, it could house a fountain. Enthemane could be a Graecised form of En Temane which, rendered into English, would be 'Well of Eight'. It is possible that there was a healing well associated with John the Baptist. As late as

1. Antoninus Placentinus 13 (CCL p.136)

2. John Moschus, Prat 1-2 (PG 87.3: 852C-853C).

3. "ubi sanctus Johannes multas virtutes operatur".
Antoninus Placentinus 8 (CCL p.133)

4. See Abel, 'Beisan' (p.420).

5. 163. 14-15; 21-26; 164.12. This is the passage describing Sabas' approach to the monastery of St. John. *πρὸς τοῦτον δ... γέγων... διὰ μέσης τῆς πόλεως, γενόμενος κατὰ τὴν γεγομένην ἀψίδα τοῦ ἁγίου Ἰωάννου, συνή τις... ἔκειτο ἐν τῇ δυτικῇ ἑμβολῇ τῆς αὐτῆς.*

For the suggestion of Festugière, see MO 3/2 p.92 note 196. Avi Yonah (Madaba Mosaic Map, pp 35-7) considers that the above reference in 163-4 refer to the sites of Aenon and Sapsaphas, south of the city. This would make nonsense of Cyril's narrative.

the twelfth century the Russian abbot Daniel was shown " a remarkable cavern which spreads out into a miraculous pool".¹

The influence of the John the Baptist tradition, with its monastic connotations, on the church in Scythopolis is confirmed by the large numbers of inhabitants of the city named John in Cyril's narrative. There is the holy anchorite John who lived in the monastery of Enthemaneith, John the Expulsor, and John the father of Cyril.²

In the fifth and sixth centuries, the monasteries of Scythopolis were large and prosperous, and enjoyed the patronage of influential citizens. The most extensive remains are those of the monastery excavated by G. Fitzgerald on the north side of the river Harod in 1930 and called by him the Monastery of the Lady Mary. It contains a complex of rooms with a church at the north-east corner. The decoration is magnificent and includes fine mosaic floors with plant and animal motifs. An inscription in the entrance hall commemorates the monastery's patrons. "The offering (προσφορά) for the memory and perfect rest in Christ of Zosimus Illustrios (ἱλλουστρίου) and for the salvation and acceptance (ἀντιλήψεως) of John the Endoxotatos (ἐνδοξοτάτου) from the prefects (ἀπὸ ἐπαρχῶν), and of Peter and Anastasius the Christ-loving Counts (κομίτων) and of all their blessed house, for the prayers of the Saints. Amen". Another inscription in the same monastery

1. B de Khitrovo, Itinéraires russes en Orient (Geneva 1889) p.59. J.T.Milik ('Notes d'épigraphie et de topographie Palestiniennes', RB, 66 (159) 550-575 at pp 563-5) attempts to show that Egeria's description of Aenon refers to this well En Temane in Scythopolis (see above p.32.) He argues that Eusebius has mistranslated En Temane, the Well of Eight, which was the original Aenon, and instead located Aenon at a place eight miles south of Scythopolis. "La source des Huit dans la banlieue de Scythopolis est devenue sous sa plume le lieu a huit milles de la ville" (Milik p.565). This would locate Aenon at Tell-er-Ridgah which has inadequate remains for such an important site. But Egeria's account does not require a site with extensive building, and the tradition placing Aenon south of Scythopolis is too strong to be discounted.
2. 163.15; 163.3-4; 164.20. Festugière (MO 3 /2, p.91 note 193) identifies John the Expulsor - ὁ τοῦ ἐκσπελάου τοῦ - with Cyril's father. Cyril gives no suggestion of this and so it is to be rejected.

shows it to have been founded by the "Christ-loving Lady (κυρία) Mary and her son Maximus".¹ Other inscriptions referring to the patronage of monasteries by senior officials have been found at Scythopolis. There was, for example, the σχολαστικός who appears in an inscription which is dated to 522; and a κόμης καὶ μέγας-πριπέστατος ἄρχοντας mentioned in a building inscription of Eustathius, also dated to 522.² These and other inscriptions show that the monasteries of the city had the support of powerful friends.

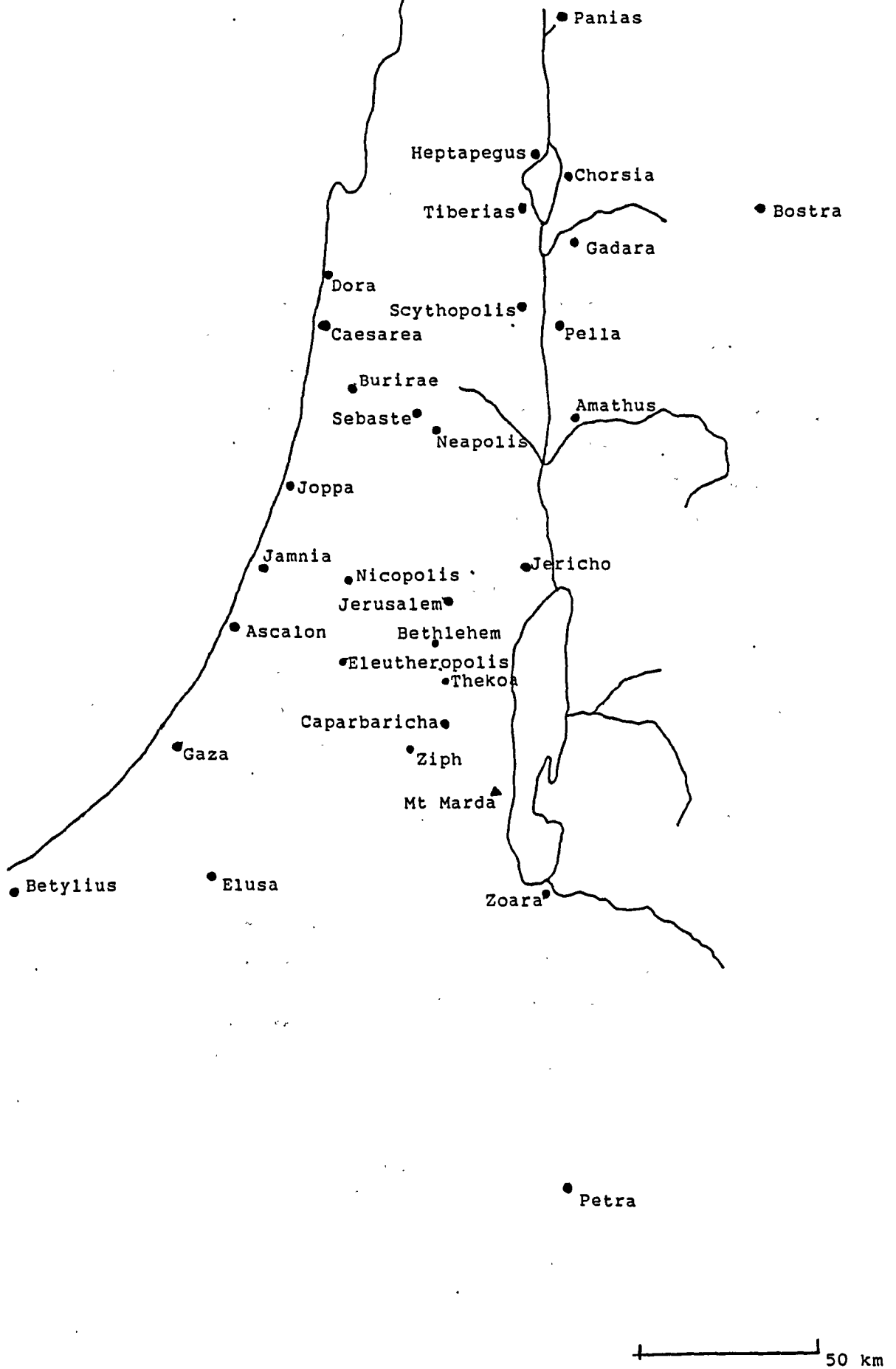
The writings of Cyril also testify to the extent of the monastic life of Scythopolis. In addition to the monastery of Enthemenaith, in which lived the anchorite John, Sabas also visited the Chapel or ἀποσταλῶν of the Apostle Thomas where the hesychast Procopius lived.³ There is also reference to one of Euthymius' monks, Kyrion, who had earlier been priest at the Chapel of the Martyr Basil.⁴ It seems as though Bishop Theodosius was closely linked to the monastic movement in the city. Sabas, on his second visit, stayed with the Bishop. "The great old man was brought in to the bishop's building (ἐν τῷ ἐπισκοπείῳ) and he stayed in the monastery of the holy martyr Procopius".⁵ It is probable that scattered monks had been gathered together and provided for by the Bishop in his residence, as happened at Jerusalem under Patriarch Elias.⁶

1. The excavations are described in G.M.Fitzgerald, a Sixth-Century Monastery in Beth-Shan (Scythopolis), (Philadelphia 1939.) For the text of the inscription, see p.13.
2. SEG 8.37; 28. 144-7. See also SEG 20.459.
3. 180. 14-19.
4. 16. 13.
5. 180. 6-8; Cyril uses the word οἶκος to describe this monastery. οἶκος is also used at 151. 12 and 19 to refer to the monastery of St. Stephen in Jerusalem built by Eudocia. Eudocia had ensured that her foundation was provided for, arranging that Gabriellus, the younger brother of Cosmas, Bishop of Scythopolis, was made Superior (ἡγουμένον τοῦ σεβασμίον οἴκου... στεφάνου 49. 16-18). Later, delegates from the monastery were present at the 536 Council of Constantinople, see Vailhé, 'Les premières monastères de la Palestine', Bess 3 (1897-8) 334-356 (p.351).
6. 116. 4-7. See also Festugière MO 3/2, p.80 note 165.

The Church of Scythopolis not only found itself on the receiving end of generous donations but also played its part in the life of the town, financing building projects on behalf of those in need. This aspect of the church's role is shown by an inscription on a limestone slab found 70 metres beyond the city wall. It reads: "Theodore the Shepherd allots, renewing them, the baths to those sick with the very grievous disease of leprosy in the time of the 7th indiction in the year 622" (i.e. 622 of the Pompeian era, hence 558/9).¹ Leprosy was endemic only in Egypt and Israel (and possibly Persia), and lepers were forbidden to enter the public baths. This resulted in a need for baths for them outside the city. Facilities for lepers were especially important in Scythopolis in view of its reputation as a place of healing. Bathing in the Jordan, and especially at the place of Christ's baptism, was regarded as a cure for leprosy.² The inscription shows that the church had a responsibility for the sick and had the resources to ensure that they were provided for.

The city into which Cyril was born was dominated by the monasteries. The ascetic strain of Christianity which they enshrined attracted both the wealthy and influential, and also the poor, like the woman with the haemorrhage waiting under the archway near the healing chapel of St. John for Sabas to pass by.³

1. The inscription is translated by M. Avi-Yonah 'The Bath of the lepers at Scythopolis', IEJ 13 (1963) 325-6.
2. 2 Kings 5.10.
3. 163. 23-25.



Chapter Two.

CYRIL'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

2 : 1. Family Background.

Cyril grew up in an environment dominated by the church. His references to his parents show them to have been devout members of the Christian community. His father, John, is first mentioned in the narrative as present with Sabas at the monastery of Enthemenaith. He was the witness of an exorcism performed by the saint and assisted in it in some way which is not made clear.¹ Thereafter he became Sabas' inseparable companion and the old man was a regular visitor at their home during his stay in Scythopolis.² By the time of Sabas' second visit to Scythopolis, John had a close relationship with the Bishop and assisted him in the administration of the diocese.³ Cyril's mother was also pious, being recognised by Sabas as a δούλη Θεοῦ. This title suggests that Sabas knew the family and so was aware of her devotion. It is not necessary to suggest that she was under religious vows.⁴

The nature of John's position in the Bishop's household is obscure. The passage describing it has a parallel in the description of Euthymius' uncle Eudoxius. Since Euthymius was born in 376, about 150 years before Cyril, it can be assumed that Cyril has drawn on his own family background in his description of that of Euthymius. The passages are as follows:

- John: ὁ ἐμὸς πατὴρ τοῦ ἐπισκοπεῖου κρατῶν τὰ
τηνικαῦτα καὶ τῷ μητροπολίτῃ συνεδρεύων (180.4-6)
- Eudoxius: λογιώτατον Εὐδόξιον μὲν καλούμενον, τοῦ
δὲ αὐτόθι ἐπισκοπεῖου κρατοῦντα καὶ τῷ
ἐπισκοπεῖῳ συνεδρεύοντα (10.6-8)
- παρὰ τοῦ ἐκκλησιαστικοῦ Εὐδοξίου. (10.15)

1. 164. 11-22. Cyril describes his father as αὐτοπτης καὶ
υπηρέτης τοῦ θαύματος.
2. 164. 21-24.
3. 180. 4-6.
4. 180. 21. For the suggestion that δούλη Θεοῦ is a title
rather than a description, see Kyrillos, p.409.
MO 3/2, p.109. n.251.

E. Schwartz offers an alternative reading, in both passages preferring the accusative τὸν ἐπισκοπεῖον to the genitive form. He states the reason for this choice of reading: "Ich sehe nicht wie ein verheirateter Laie den Bischofspalast beherrschen oder besitzen konnte".¹ He understands the passage to mean that Cyril's father had taken up residence in the bishop's lodging. This suggestion cannot be accepted. The majority of the manuscripts read τοῦ ἐπισκοπεῖου.² Even if his revision is accepted, the meaning he suggests is rare. Cyril uses the verb κρατεῖν 55 times in his writings, and only once does it have the meaning 'to inhabit'.³

τοῦ ἐπισκοπεῖου κρατῶν is most likely to mean that John held a responsible post within the episcopal administration. If we accept that the description of Eudoxius also applies to John, then he is λογιώτατος and σχολαστικός.

The study of the use of the title σχολαστικός by A.Claus shows that it was used loosely to refer to somebody who has achieved a high standard of education. The σχολαστικός often came from a high level of society and many opportunities for social advancement were open to him, both in civil and ecclesiastical life. Claus gives several examples of a σχολαστικός enjoying a high position in the church, even rising to become Patriarch of Constantinople. There seems to be little difficulty therefore in accepting John's responsible position in the administration of the diocese.⁴

Cyril's father took advantage of his position in the diocese to strengthen his relationship with Sabas. During Sabas' second visit, John was with him 'inseparably' (ἀναπόσπαστον)⁵ Before Sabas' departure, he visited Cyril's house to bless the family.⁶ The family kept in touch with Sabas' monasteries after

1. Kyrillos, p.409. n.1.

2. The accusative appears in only one out of four manuscripts - the ninth or tenth century Ottobonianus 373s. For a consideration of these readings, see Thomsen "Kyrillos von Scythopolis" OLZ 43 (1940) 457-463, Col.461.

3. MH p.14

4. A.Claus 'σχολαστικός' (dissertation, Cologne, 1965), pp.162-4.

5. 180.8.

6. 181.1.

the founder's death. Monks visiting Scythopolis used the house as a guest-house and brought gifts and news of the family to the monastery.¹

With the strong monastic influence on the church in Scythopolis, and the close involvement of Cyril's family in the church, there is a certain inevitability about Cyril's early life. He was born in 525, and so was about six years old when Sabas made his second visit to Scythopolis. It would have been a natural gesture for the old monk to have embraced the young boy, whose connection with the bishop's house, including the monastery, was so close, and to have claimed him as his disciple. "From this moment this child is my disciple and the son of the fathers of the desert".² The Bishop retained an interest in him and often inquired of Cyril's father how the boy was progressing.³ He ensured that Cyril received an appropriate education and in due course was tonsured and ordained into the first order of the clergy.⁴ We do not know when this tonsuring took place. It should be distinguished from the next significant moment in Cyril's career, when he made his monastic renunciation and received the habit from the priest and hesychast George, at the monastery of Beella near Scythopolis.⁵ In his translation, Festugière emphasises the distinction between the two events by translating ἐν κλήρῳ ἐκκλησιαστικῷ καταλεγόμενος by "alors que j'avais été déjà inscrit dans l'ordre du clergé". This seems to be over-emphasised but he is right to distinguish the two events.⁶

1. τῷ ἡμετέρῳ οἴκῳ ὡς ἰδίῳ αὐτῶν ξενοδοχείῳ. 217.14-15.

2. 108. 11-12

3. 181. 14-17

4. 181. 16-18. καὶ οὕτως εὐλογήσας με καὶ αποθείξας ἐν τῇ ἀρχῇ τῶν ἐκκλησιαστικῶν κατέστησεν βαθμῶν, 181. 17-18. Note another parallel in the early Life of Euthymius. καὶ τὸν μὲν παῖδα δεξιόμενος βάπτισεν καὶ ἀποθείξας ἀκωνώστην τῆς ὑπ' αὐτὸν ἐκκλησίας ἐποίησεν. 10. 19-21. The passage continues καὶ ἐν τῷ ἐπισκοπεῖν λαβὼν καὶ... ἀνέτρεφεν.

Could this imply a similar experience of living in the Bishop's house for Cyril?

5. 71. 11-16.

6. MO, 3/2, pp.126-7.

2 : 2. Education and Culture.

The city of Caesarea was a centre of learning and study. Its schools were celebrated throughout the Eastern Mediterranean. Procopius, from Gaza, and Gregory of Nazianzus, from Cappadocia, were attracted to Caesarea by the school of rhetorical, legal and literary studies, which had flourished from the third century. In addition a school of Rabbinic studies was founded in the same century. It declined after the death of its prestigious teacher, R. Hoshaya, and Tiberias emerged as the centre of rabbinic studies, although several academies continued to offer an education to the Jewish community of Caesarea. The mid-third century was also the period when Origen established his famous school. It was divided into two sections. As well as a course of study catering for the more simple (τὴν ῥητορικωτέραν) Origen encouraged more advanced students in the study of philosophy and the Bible. The huge library at Caesarea was founded by Pamphilus and developed by Eusebius, Acacius and Euzoius. Caesarea's intellectual life was at its zenith from the mid-third to mid-fourth centuries, from the arrival of Origen in the city in 231 to the death of Eusebius in about 340.¹

Scythopolis was about thirty miles distant from Caesarea. It developed no comparable intellectual life. We hear of some highly educated individuals associated with the city. One of Plotinus' pupils was 'Paulinus', a student of medicine from Scythopolis whom Amelius called 'Miccalus', and a certain Basilides, from Scythopolis, taught the Emperor Marcus Aurelius.² In the fourth century, Bishop Patrophilus was renowned for his learning and Eusebius of Emesa travelled to Scythopolis to study the Bible under his guidance.³ Figures such as these show that the city participated in the cultural life of the Mediterranean world, even though there

1. The intellectual history of Caesarea is presented by L. Levine, Caesarea under Roman Rule (Leiden 1975) pp.58-60, 88-9, 120-3. For Origen's school, see Gregory Thaumaturgus' Panegyric on Origen 7-15. (SC pp.134-172).
2. Porphyry, Life of Plotinus, 7.6-16, ed. P. Henry, H.R. Schwyzler. Plotini Opera vol.1 (Paris, Brussels 1951) p.12; Pauly-Wissowa. 3.1 col.46.
3. Socrates, HE. 2.9 (PG.67; 197B).

is no evidence of academic institutions like those of Caesarea.

During the sixth century, a writer of wide learning and clear style flourished in Scythopolis. His existence could be an indication of the cultural background in which Cyril grew up and so of the extent of the literary influences to which he was exposed. Called John, he is known only from second-hand accounts. The references to him are analysed by F. Loofs and his conclusions have been generally accepted.¹ Leontius of Jerusalem writes of him as "John Bishop of Scythopolis who laboured in writing against the Apollinarians".² The Acts of the 680 Council of Constantinople speak of a "John Bishop of Scythopolis in the saints" who wrote against Severus of Antioch. This work is also referred to by Photius.³ Severus of Antioch says that he wrote "a very long book", an apology for the Council of Chalcedon. This work is also referred to by Photius.⁴ Photius writes of him as "John the Scholastic". Loofs, followed by Flusin, rejects the identification of this John with the "John the scholastic in Scythopolis the son of the expulsor, a wise man" who met Sabas on his first visit, although other authors have been inclined to accept it.⁵ It is possible that John also wrote a set of Scholia on pseudo-Dionysius. The evidence for this from Anastasius the Librarian in a letter to Charles the Bald and from Phocas bar-Sargis in the introduction of his translation of Ps-Dionysius into Syriac is late but H.Urs von Balthasar accepts John's authorship.⁶

1. F.Loofs: Leontius von Byzanz, Leipzig 1887, pp.269-272.
The relevant passages are conveniently set out in MH, pp.18-19.
2. Leontius of Jerusalem, Contra Monophysitas (PG 86.2: 1865B-C).
3. Mansi XI. col.437D. and Photius: Bibliotheca, ed. R.Henry, Bibliothèque Vol.2 (Paris 1960) p.48.
4. Severus, Liber contra impium Grammaticum 3.1.(tr) J.Lebon, CSCO 94, p.201-2; Photius, Bibliotheca, cod.231 (ed) R.Henry, Bibliothèque Vol.5 (Paris 1967) p.66.
5. 163. 3-4. Among those who accepted the identification is P.T.R. Gray, The Defense of Chalcedon in the East, (Leiden 1979) p.111.
6. This question has received special attention because of the implications for the provenance of the Dionysian corpus. See, for bibliographical references, H.Urs von Balthasar "Das Schollenwerk des Johannes von Scythopolis", Schol. 15 (1940) 16-38 (pp.62-3). Reservations over John's authorship were expressed by C.Moeller, 'Un représentant de la Christologie Néochalcédonienne au début du sixième siècle en orient, Nephalius d'Alexandrie', RHE 40 (1944-5) 73-140 (p.121) but were withdrawn by the same author in a later article 'Le chalcédonisme et le néo-chalcédonisme en orient de 451 à la fin du VIe siècle', in Das Konzil von Chalkedon ed Grillmeier. Bacht, vol.1 (Wurzburg 1951) pp.637-720 (at p.675)

John was a man who had read widely. The list of authors cited in the Scholia and collected by Flusin contains 78 names.¹ They include classical authors like Plato, Aristotle and Euripides; early church authors such as Hermas and Clement of Rome; the historian Eusebius of Caesarea; heretics like Nestorius, Eutyches and Apollinarius of Laodicea; writers from his own day, Antipater of Bostra and ps-Dionysius; as well as the most well known of the Christian writers, Gregory Nazianzus, Basil of Caesarea and Origen. The question that inevitably arises is whether this list represents the range of learning to which Cyril would have been exposed during his boyhood in Scythopolis.

There is no information in contemporary sources about the date at which John was Bishop. We know that Theodosius was Bishop of Scythopolis in 518, when Sabas made his first visit to the city, and that he was present at the Council of Jerusalem in 536.² He died some time after 536. About 548, Theodore became Bishop. He was the Origenist superior of the New Laura who was nominated as Bishop by Theodore Ascidas in his desire to advance as many supporters of the 'Isochrist' Origenist group to prominent positions in the church. He was still Bishop after 553.³ So John could have been bishop either before Theodosius (earlier than 518), or between Theodosius and Theodore (between 536 and 548), or after Theodore (after 553).

Such indications as there are in contemporary or near contemporary literature suggest that John was Bishop between Theodosius and Theodore. John of Scythopolis' Contra Severum refers to the quarrel between Severus and Julian of Halicarnassus, which took place after 518, which excludes the possibility that he preceded Bishop Theodosius.⁴ Photius, in the Bibliotheca, refers to a debate between John and Basileios, a presbyter in Antioch at the time of the Emperor Anastasius.⁵

1. MH, pp.22-4

2. 162. 26-27; ACO 3p,188.8, for the list of signatories of the Acts of the Council.

3. 197.19 - 198.1. For 'Isochrists' see below, pp.264-265.

4. Mansi. XI. 437D.

5. Photius, Bibliotheca, cod. 107, (ed) R.Henry, Bibliothèque. vol.2. (Paris 1960) p.48.

Since Anastasius died in 518, it would seem impossible for John to have lived after 553. In the Scholia, John speaks of the Origenists as his contemporaries. καὶ νῦν δὲ οἱ ἀπὸ τῶν Ὀριγενέους προερχόμενοι μύθων.¹ This makes it unlikely that John wrote before Theodosius, since the Origenists had not yet become prominent in Palestine, or after Theodore, since the end of his episcopate coincided with the downfall of the Origenists. A third piece of evidence is provided by Leontius of Jerusalem who, in the Contra Monophysitas, writes of John as Bishop of Scythopolis. M. Richard dates this work to the period before the affair of the Three Chapters since Leontius refers to the authors condemned in 553 with no apparent awareness of their heretical status.² Together these references have led commentators to locate John's episcopate after that of Theodosius and before that of Theodore.

This dating of John's episcopate is put in doubt by the silence of Cyril. At the time when John is supposed to have been Bishop of Cyril's home town, Cyril was living either in Scythopolis or in the Jerusalem desert, some fifty miles distant. He makes no reference in the Lives to John. This is surprising since John was an author whose works circulated widely.

The main influence on Cyril was undoubtedly Bishop Theodosius. It was he who tonsured Cyril. Flusin assumes that since this tonsuring was a separate event from Cyril's entry to the monastery of George at Beella, therefore "il est inutile de supposer que Theodore ait siégé à Scythopolis jusqu'en 543".³ However, Cyril states that Theodosius presided over his education and often inquired after him.⁴ We must therefore assume a considerable lapse of time between Sabas' second visit to Scythopolis in 532 and Theodosius' ordination of Cyril. It is possible that the absence of reference to any other Bishop for the period that Cyril lived in Scythopolis is because Theodosius was still Bishop in 543 when Cyril travelled to Jerusalem.

1. Scholia PG 4: 176A

2. Leontius of Jerusalem, Contra Monophysitas (PG 86.2: 1865B-C).
M. Richard. 'Léonce de Jérusalem et Léonce de Byzance', MSR
1(1944)35-88

3. MH, p. 16.

4. 181.15-18

Cyril and John belong to different cultural backgrounds. Of the large dossier of authors referred to by John, only one, Gregory of Nazianzus, is used by Cyril. And the authors who influenced Cyril do not appear in the writings of John. John does not fit comfortably into the church of Scythopolis with its strong monastic influence which Cyril describes.

The most likely explanation of Cyril's silence about the episcopate of John and the sharp contrast between their writing is that John did not become Bishop until after the death of Theodore. This possibility demands serious consideration. Photius wrote in the ninth century - three hundred years after the lifetime of John of Scythopolis and his reference to Basileios of Antioch is not corroborated by any earlier author. The reference to the Origenists in the Scholia could be explained as an attempt to add vividness to his attack on Origenist positions or as an indication that Origenist teaching was current in Palestine after 553. Further, the way in which Leontius of Jerusalem writes of the authors condemned at the 553 Council of Constantinople could be explained by a desire to dissociate himself from the Council's decision. These references cannot be held to be conclusive when considered alongside the indications provided by Cyril's narrative. The dating offered by Flusin, Loofs and Perrone must be reconsidered.¹

However, whatever the date which is preferred for John's episcopate, the long list of authors with which John was familiar shows that Cyril came from a different cultural background. Cyril's upbringing and education took place in a strongly monastic environment.

Evidence for education being offered by the monasteries is plentiful from the fourth century. John Cassian describes young boys being received and educated by the fathers of the desert.²

1. See MH, pp.20-21; Loofs, Leontius von Byzanz, pp.269-272; L.Perrone, La Chiesa di Palestina e le Controversie Cristologiche (Brescia 1980) pp.240-249.

These argue for a date between the episcopates of Theodosius and Theodore on the basis of literary evidence.

2. John Cassian, Institutes 5.40.1-12 (SC pp.254-256)

Antony, who fled to the desert as an illiterate Copt, is presented later as an educated man capable of holding disputations with visiting philosophers.¹ Strong emphasis was placed on education in the Pachomian monasteries.² In addition to the monastery, the bishop's house was also a place where an education could be received. H-I. Marrou writes of "la troupe de jeunes enfants qui revêtus des fonctions de lecteurs, s'initiaient à la vie clericale".³

In these circles there was a deliberate attempt to replace the pagan examples used in secular education with exercises drawn from the Bible. Basil prescribes that children should learn to read by graduating through names of personalities in the Bible, verses from Proverbs and holy stories instead of names, maxims and anecdotes drawn from classical mythology.⁴ A schoolboy's exercise book, dating from the fourth or fifth century, has been discovered in Fayoum in Egypt containing writing exercises taken from Psalm 32.⁵

Cyril was educated in the Bishop's house at Scythopolis. One of his teachers was his father who, as λογιώπαις and σχολαστικός was well qualified to perform this task. He learnt the Psalter and the Epistles, and received as a result of his education a detailed knowledge of the Bible which he referred to continually throughout his writings.⁶ He read the Lives of the Saints which were popular in the Palestine of his day. He acquired some knowledge of rhetoric, and his writing includes, for example, an ekphrasis on the beauties of the site of Euthymius' monastery.⁷ But, it should be repeated, his work reveals no knowledge of classical, non-Christian writings.

1. V. Anton, 72, 73 (PG 26: 944C, 945A).
2. V. Paah G' 24, 28 (Athanassakis. 30.12-18, 38.35.)
3. H-I. Marrou, Histoire de l'éducation dans l'antiquité, 2nd edn. (Paris 1948) p.438, For a discussion of education in Eastern Monasteries, see pp 433-438.
4. Basil, Regulae fusius tractatae 18 (PG 31:953B-D).
5. P. Sanz, Griechische literarische Papyri Christlicher Inhaltes 1, cited Marrou, Histoire de l'éducation, p.434.
6. 181.16.
7. 64.21.-65.8.

2 : 3. Monastic Career.

Cyril points to his meeting with Sabas as the true start of his monastic career, although it was several years later that he made his monastic renunciation. This encounter was between a young boy born into an environment in which the monastic life was valued and respected, and the aged, authoritative leader of the most prestigious monasteries in the country. In it, Cyril was called to be the "son of the fathers of the desert".¹ It was an experience which emphasised the importance of accepting the authority and the influence of others.

The personal authority of Sabas was quickly removed, since he died shortly after his visit to Scythopolis, but the ideal of accepting the guidance of senior monks remained important to Cyril. It was reinforced by later experiences.

Two men had an especially close relationship with him and, as a result, an especially strong influence. They were George of Beella and John the Hesychast. Cyril dedicated his two major works to George, describing him as "the most honourable and truly virtuous spiritual father George the priest and superior living the life of silence pleasing to God (Θεαρέστως ἡσυχάζοντι) at the place near Scythopolis called Beella".² An inscription at the monastery of the Lady Mary outside the walls of Scythopolis refers to "τοῦ πρεσβυτέρου Γεωργίου καὶ ἡγουμένου καὶ δευτερχαίου".³

and since George was not a common name, there is a strong possibility that Cyril's George lived in this monastery.⁴ George knew Cyril in his youth and approved of his intention to live in the Judaean desert. He received him into the monastic life and so allowed him to make his journey to Jerusalem as a professed monk.⁵ The two men remained in close contact with each other. George acted as adviser to Cyril and was responsible for guiding him in his decision

1. 180.12.

2. 5.1-3; Cf. 85.8-10.

3. See G. Fitzgerald, Sixth Century Monastery, p.13.

4. Only two other Georges occur in Cyril's writings. A monk who lived in the Great Laura and the monastery of the Cave before becoming Bishop of Pelusium in Egypt; and a superior of the New Laura. 126.21-127.3; 195.16-17; 196.3-4.

5. 71.15-16.

to move from the New Laura to the Great Laura, which took place at the beginning of 557.¹ Cyril had objected that the New Laura had been occupied by Origenists, but George's insistence that it was better for him to live in the Laura which bore Sabas' name prevailed.² George also encouraged Cyril in his writing. He supplied him with information about the actions of Sabas in Scythopolis which had taken place in Cyril's boyhood or before he was born, and, when he discovered that Cyril had been collecting information about the lives of Euthymius and Sabas, he instructed Cyril to gather them together in a proper order.³ The esteem in which Cyril held George is indicated by his dedicating his main writings to him.

Cyril's other close relationship was with John the Hesychast. John had also known of the boy Cyril from earliest youth from his disciples who had been guests in Cyril's home.⁴ John was respected by the family and Cyril's mother gave her son firm instructions to follow his guidance when he travelled to Jerusalem.⁵ John was living the life of an anchorite at the Great Laura and Cyril visited him to seek his advice.⁶ John's counsel followed the principles laid down by Sabas, and Euthymius before him, that young monks should begin by living in the coenobium and he directed Cyril to enter the monastery of Euthymius, which at that time was a coenobium enjoying close relationships with the Great Laura.⁷ Cyril no doubt felt that he was following the spirit of John's counsel, if not the letter, by choosing the alternative destination of the Laura of Calamon, near the Dead Sea, a monastic settlement with a coenobium set in the midst of hermit's cells, thus allowing novices to be in close contact with hermits in order to learn from them.⁸

1. For this date see EStein, 'Cyrille de Scythopolis', An Boll 62 (1944) 169-186 (p.180). He corrects Schwartz's dating, which would locate this event in 556.
2. 181. 7-8
3. 83. 18-20; 164. 25-28.
4. 217. 14-17.
5. 71. 20-25; 216. 10-15.
6. 72. 2-4.
7. The coenobium of Euthymius was one of the seven monasteries under Sabas' care, 159.1.
8. 216. 21-24. For an account of this Laura, see Vailhé, 'Les Laures de saint Gerasime et de Calamon', EOr 2(1899) 106-119; and MH pp.228-229.

This act of insubordination led to a salutary lesson. Within six months Cyril fell ill and only recovered after John appeared to him in a dream re-affirming his instructions to enter Euthymius' monastery. Cyril understood this to be a justly merited chastisement. The words of the vision were: "you disobeyed my instructions and have been sufficiently corrected" (ἱκανῶς ἐπαυθεύθης).¹

Cyril remained in close contact with John throughout his monastic life. He sought the elder man's advice over the two important decisions of whether he should move to the New Laura and then, later, to the Great Laura.² He was a regular visitor to John's cell - "I visited him continually, laying before him everything in my mind".³ This phrase - πάντα τὰ κατ' ἐμὲ αὐτῇ ἐνατιθέμενος - or phrases equivalent to it occur regularly in the Life of John the Hesychast but are not used in connection with Cyril's other subjects.⁴ For Cyril, John was the spiritual guide par excellence.

During these visits, John told Cyril many stories both about Sabas, whom he had known personally, and about Euthymius. Cyril refers to John as his main source of information and says that he 'aroused' him to write down his accounts.⁵ Since Cyril was not an eye-witness of most of the events of which he wrote, he had to seek information from others. Travelling around the monasteries, listening to the older monks and learning from them was an important part of his activity as an author. Within this process, the authority of George of Beella and John the Hesychast was of especial significance, and the decision to record the events in ordered sequence was taken as a result of their encouragement and instruction. His authorship was an aspect of his discipleship.

Cyril's monastic career took place in a period of conflict. The lifetime of Sabas was perceived - somewhat unrealistically -

1. 217. 4.

2. 119. 23-24; 217. 22-23.

3. 217. 12-13.

4. eg. 216.19; 217.26.

5. 105. 20-21. Cf. 56.20; 107. 23.

as a golden age which had passed. It was a time of unity, in which there was 'one confession of faith (μία τῇ πίστεως ὁμολογία) in all the monasteries of the desert'.¹ The death of Sabas allowed Nonnus and his companions to teach Origenist doctrines first in the New Laura, then in the monasteries of Martyrius and Firminus, and finally in the other monasteries of the desert. For a while, even the Great Laura was under their influence.² The advance of the Origenist cause suffered a brief set-back in 543 when Justinian's edict against Origen was published in Jerusalem and was signed by all the Palestinian bishops except Alexander of Abila.³ The Origenist monks retreated to the Padiad, but quickly re-asserted their power to such effect that an orthodox monk who ventured into Jerusalem was likely to be insulted, beaten and thrown out of the city. The title 'Sabaite' was a term of abuse.⁴ The Origenist ascendancy persisted until Nonnus died in 547 and the party disintegrated into smaller factions.⁵

Cyril arrived in Jerusalem in the autumn of 543, when the Origenists were in temporary disarray following the publication of Justinian's edict. He then spent several months at the Laura of Calamon, near Jericho, until he entered Euthymius' monastery, probably in July 544. The monastery of Euthymius was only a few hundred yards from the main Jerusalem-Jericho highway and allowed easy access to the capital.⁶ Living so close to Jerusalem, Cyril observed at close quarters the increase in the power of the Origenists to the point where the group was able to impose its own choice of candidate as superior of the Great Laura and as Patriarch of Jerusalem.⁷

Cyril's mother was aware of the dangers of this situation to her impressionable son. She issued a firm warning against the heretical opinions of the Origenists and instructed her son to rely totally on the unquestioned orthodoxy of John the Hesychast.⁸

1. 188. 7-9.

2. 188. 17-24.

3. 192. 12-17.

4. 193. 21-24.

5. 196. 1-2.

6. See below, p.123.

7. 195. 16-20; 198. 10.

8. 216. 11-13.



Cyril had been well-educated. As Festugière points out, he belongs among the monks who were λογιστῆροι upon whom he pours such scorn.¹ The speculations of Origenism attracted him and when he visited Cyriac the hermit, he spoke with sympathy of the apparent support which the writing of Gregory of Nazianzus gave to Origenist speculation. This tentative enquiry led Cyriac to deliver a lengthy attack on Origenist views.² Cyril was involved in the ferment of theological discussion as an active participant.

He also participated in the victory over Origenism, as one of the party of orthodox monks who colonised the Origenist stronghold of the New Laura after the expulsion of the heretical monks.³ He describes how he began his task of writing while he was at the New Laura, at the time when the victory over heresy had been won; and unity had returned to the monasteries of the Desert.⁴ His writing reflects his experience of conflict and of ultimate victory. It describes the orthodox faith and resolute struggle of the monastic saints against the twin heresies of Monophysitism and Origenism and it is a witness to its ultimate triumph.⁵

The years that Cyril spent in the Judaeian desert were spent in four monasteries. These were the laura of Calamon, where he settled from January to July 544; the coenobium of Euthymius from July 544 to February 555; the New Laura from February 555 to early in 557; and the Great Laura from 557 until his death.⁶

Two of these monasteries contained the tombs of the founders, Euthymius and Sabas. While he resided in these, Cyril witnessed many miracles performed by the saint through his remains. Cyril arranged his lives so that the collections of these posthumous miracles occur in separate sections following the accounts of the saints' deaths.⁷ He witnessed some of these miracles personally,

1. MO, 3/1, p.43.

2. 229. 24 - 231. 19.

3. 199. 21 - 200. 3.

4. 84. 21. This sense of triumph is present in John Moschus Prat 4 (PG 87.3:2856 B - C) who tells of a companion of Cyril at the New Laura who had a vision of an angel defending the altar.

5. This theme is expanded below, pp. 230-266.

6. 226. 24; 227. 11; 119.23-24; 217.22-23.

7. MH, pp.53-54 suggests that Basil of Seleucia's Life and Miracles of St.Thecla, which consists of an account of her life followed by a lengthy collection of miracles performed after her death, provided a model for Cyril.

as when the tomb of Sabas was opened for the burial of Cassian and he saw "the body of the divine old man perfectly preserved without a trace of corruption" or when he, and other brothers, were washing 'malcoas' and a man possessed by a devil rushed up and was later cured after spending some time lying on the tomb of Euthymius.¹ In the case of other miracles he claims to have been told directly by the recipient.² Cyril says that the experience of witnessing these miracles led him to undertake his research on the life of Euthymius. "A burning desire came to me to learn and to write about his behaviour and conduct in the flesh". Then he began to ask the god-bearing and oldest fathers for information about Euthymius.³

He experienced the monastery as a place where the power of the saint was present and where divine grace was available. An important motive for writing was to testify to the holiness of the place. He wanted to encourage others to value the monasteries and to show that those who live in them or visit them can expect to derive healing or other benefits from their contact with the tomb of the saint.⁴ He writes to prevent the actions of the saint from being forgotten and as a result, to maintain the influence and prestige of the monasteries which they founded.

His task was especially urgent in the case of the monastery of Euthymius.⁵ The organisation of the settlement had been changed from the original laurite to a coenobitic way of life, and the old buildings destroyed to make way for the new monastery. This transformation was justified by an appeal to the deathbed instructions of the saint and a posthumous appearance in a dream.⁶ The loyal supporters of Euthymius, the bedouin tribesmen settled below the monastery in the Camp of Tents, had been scattered by attacks of hostile bedouin tribes, and retired to a safer location near to the

1. 184. 15-17; 77. 15 - 78.2.

2. eg. 72. 15.

3. 82, 28-83.1.

4. 71. 5-11; 82. 12-28.

5. See Kyrillos, pp. 373-4.

6. 58. 27-59.5; 63. 24-26.

monastery of Martyrius, from where a second attack drove them to take refuge in various villages.¹ Further signs of the decline in the importance of Euthymius' monastery, and hence his reputation, is the absence of a representative of the monastery in the list of signatories at the Synod of Constantinople in 536,² and the sparse attention given by John Moschus, who mentions the monastery in only two chapters of the Spiritual Meadow.³ The insignificance of the monastery was a reason for Cyril's reluctance to enter it. The evidence of the miracles and his researches into the founder's life led him to write to restore the monastery's vanishing reputation.

The connection between Cyril's writings and the places where he lived provides neglected evidence in a debate over a possible addition to the Cyrillian corpus. A Life of Gerasimus was found by A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus in codex Patmiacus 188.⁴ He attributed it to Cyril, mainly on grounds of style. This attribution was accepted by, among others, Fr. Diekamp.⁵ H. Grégoire has argued convincingly that this Life is not by Cyril but is a compilation based on various sources, including Cyril's writings, made by a monk of Gerasimus' monastery in the second half of the sixth century.⁶ However, one section consisting of the end of Chapter 2 and Chapters 3 and 4 of the Life is, he thinks, by Cyril. This passage appears in a manuscript of Cyril's Life of Euthymius and in the Metaphrastic version of the Life.⁷

Flusin argues that this interpolation into the Life of Euthymius was the work of a monk of Gerasimus' monastery.⁸ He considers that

1. 67.21 - 68.2. Cyril gives no information about the subsequent history of this Bedouin community, but a Peter, Bishop of the Paremboses, was present at the 536 Synod of Jerusalem (ACO 3. p 189. 5.) Perhaps his diocese consisted of the villages in which the Bedouin had settled.
2. Kyriillos, p.365.
3. John Moschus, Prat 21, 124. (PG 87.3: 2868B-C. 2985B).
4. See MH, pp.226-229.
5. Fr. Diekamp, Die Origenistischen Streitigkeiten im Sechsten Jahrhundert (Munster 1899) p.6.
6. H. Grégoire, 'La vie anonyme de S. Gerasime', ByZ 13 (1904) 114-135.
7. Codex Sinaiticus gr. 524, used by the monk Augoustinos for his edition of the Life of Euthymius in Νέα Ζώνη 11-12 (Jerusalem 1911-12). It is reprinted by Flusin, MH, pp.226-229.
8. See MH, pp.35-40.

it is unlikely that Cyril would have written a passage describing the virtues of Gerasimus, which would have been a diversion from his main purpose of commending Euthymius. He also points out that the passage contains a description of the rule of Gerasimus' laura and Cyril makes little reference to the rules of Euthymius' or Sabas' monasteries.¹

These arguments become less persuasive when viewed from the standpoint of Cyril's life. He began his monastic career at the Laura of Calamon which was closely related to the Monastery of Gerasimus. The monasteries share the same aetiological tradition; that the Virgin Mary, Joseph and Jesus rested at the site during their flight to Egypt. The name Calamon is derived from καλὰ μονία or 'good abode'. The closeness of the River Jordan and of the town of Jericho made Calamon a natural choice for those seeking a place to live the ascetic life. Hermits were living there before the arrival of Chariton in the fourth century.² It has been suggested that the two monasteries of Calamon and Gerasimus did not become separate until the late fifth century when they divided as a result of controversy over the Council of Chalcedon.³ Cyril's interest in Gerasimus is accounted for by his residence at Calamon.

Gerasimus, around whom a distinct monastic community gathered, arrived in Jerusalem from Lycia in 451. He was contemporary with Euthymius and enjoyed a close relationship with him. Cyril describes how this friendship was forged when Gerasimus joined Euthymius in his witness to the Chalcedonian faith during the episcopate of the usurper Theodosius.⁴ It was maintained through Gerasimus joining Euthymius in his travels in the Desert of Rouba during Lent. A small group of hardened ascetics would spend Lent in this inhospitable part of the desert near the Dead Sea, meeting on Sundays to receive communion from Euthymius.⁵ Euthymius' trust

1. Euthymius' and Sabas' rule against allowing the unbearded into the monastery is an exception to this statement. 91. 7-28.

2. VChar. (PG. 115: 912 B-C).

3. For the history of the monasteries see D.J.Chitty, 'Two monasteries in the wilderness of Judaea', PEFQSt (1928) 134-152; O.Meinardus, 'Notes on the Laurae and Monasteries of the Wilderness of Judaea', SBFLA 16 (1899) 106-119. (pp.332-337); S.Vailhé, 'Les laures de saint Gerasime et de Calamon', EOr 2 (1899) 106-119.

4. 44. 19-24.

5. 56. 25-29; 225. 10-13.

in Gerasimus was such that he sent novices to his monastery, after the death of Theoctisus, among whom was the young Cyriac.¹ Gerasimus was informed of the death of Euthymius through a vision and went to Euthymius' monastery to share in the funeral rites.² Gerasimus died two years later, in March 475, but his monastery retained its importance. A later superior, Eugenius, who presided over the monastery from 481 to 526, assisted Sabas in his responsibilities as archimandrite of the laurae of the desert.³ John Moschus visited the monastery and recounts many anecdotes concerning its monks.⁴

The monastery of Gerasimus was an important monastic settlement, which was closely associated with the monastery of Euthymius during the life-times of the founders. During his brief stay at Calamon, Cyril would have become acquainted with the traditions preserved in the monastery. These circumstances provide a sufficient motive to account for Cyril's desire to record information about Gerasimus and his monastery. It is possible that since the interpolation in the Life of Euthymius describes the rule of life in Gerasimus' monastery, Cyril was seeking to commend the monastery and to justify his decision to settle there against the advice of John the Hesychast. In the absence of convincing stylistic and textual evidence against Cyrillian authorship, these historical arguments can be accepted as showing that it is probable that Cyril wrote an account of Gerasimus' monastery which was interpolated into his Life of Euthymius by himself or a later redactor.

The monasteries of Euthymius and Sabas were, at the time of Cyril, visited by many who hoped for healing or guidance from the tombs of the saints. These visitors came from villages and monasteries in the area. Cyril tells, for example, of a monk Paul

1. 224. 24-26

2. 225. 13. 17.

3. 239. 11-12. Eugenius is not mentioned in the equivalent passage in the Life of Sabas, 115. 24-26.

4. John Moschus, Prat 11, 12, 107, 141, 142, 219 (Gerasimus); 26, 46, 98, 99, 100, 101, 157 (Calamon).

(PG.87.3: 2860D 2861A, 2872B, 2900D 2957B-D; 2960B-D, 2963D- 2969B, 3004B-C, 3025B-C, 3109B).

The monastery of Calamon should be distinguished from other monasteries with the same name in Egypt, at Fayoum and near Alexandria, see M-J Rouet de Journal (ed), Le pré spirituel (SC p.215).

from the monastery of Martyrius, troubled by an unclean spirit, and a Saracen Christian (one of those perhaps who had lived in the camp of the Tents before its destruction by hostile Bedouin tribes) who lived at Lazarion, the modern Bethany.¹

Throughout the Roman Empire the tombs of martyrs and ascetics were becoming centres for local devotion. Peter Brown reports an inscription from the tomb of Martin: "Here is laid Bishop Martin of holy memory, whose soul is in the hand of God, but is completely present here manifested in all the grace of miracles (virtutum)"² This testimony to belief in the power that comes from the saint's grave is from the western end of the Empire. Palestine, inevitably contained the mortal remains of the great figures from the Bible. It is not surprising that Sozomen, Palestinian by birth, should comment on the custom in Palestine of honouring the bones of the saints and of holding an annual memorial festival and should conclude his history with an account of the discovery and translation to Constantinople of the bones of the prophet Zechariah.³ Other important discoveries included the remains of the martyrs Eusebius and Nastabus at Gaza, preserved by a local Christian lady; of Habakkuk and Micah and of Zacharias and his son John the Baptist in the village of Kefargamala near Eleutheropolis.⁴ Egeria tells how she visited Job's tomb at Carneas, east of the Sea of Galilee and an inscription found at Jerusalem witnesses to a local veneration of the proto-martyr Stephen - *εὐτυχὶς Στέφανος*.⁵ Living in a society so richly provided with the bones of holy men, the devout sentiments of the monk Barsanuphius are not surprising. "When I find that I am in a place where there are relics of the holy martyrs, I am obsessed by the need to go in and venerate them. Every time I pass in front of them, I feel I should bow my head".⁶

1. 72.8-9; 75.29-30.

2. E. le Blant, Les inscriptions chrétiennes de la Gaule (Paris 1856) 1.240, cited in P.R.L. Brown, Cult of the Saints (London 1981) p.4.

3. Sozomen. HE 3.14.27. (GCS 122.15-19)

4. Sozomen. HE 5.9.6-10; 7.29.1. (GCS 205.11-25; 345.11-12). Theophanes, Chron 5919 (ed. de Boor. 86.21)

5. Itin Aeth 16. (SC 194.1-7); SEG 8. 1937. 194.

6. Barsanuphius and John, cited in Brown, Cult of the Saints, p.5.

In spite of Cyril's interest in the monasteries in which he lived and the contemporary fascination for the relics of the saints, the Lives do not seem to have been written to encourage the veneration of the relics of Euthymius or Sabas. As well as miracles at the tomb of the saint, he tells of miracles performed far away from the monastery as a result of prayers addressed to the saint. A typical example of this group of miracles is the prayer of Romanus, who lived in a village called Betakabeis near Gaza. Euthymius appeared to him in a vision and healed him.¹ In the case of the miracles following the death of Sabas, all are performed by him in response to an appeal addressed in prayer.²

The purpose of these miracle stories is to show that the power which the saint exercised during his life continues to be efficacious and available after his death. Cyril says that he has included them because they provide a posthumous confirmation by God of the virtue that the saint showed during his life. So they are there to encourage the reader to put his trust in the truth of what is told.³ They also show that the protection that he gave during his lifetime continued after death.⁴ The miracle story which forms a basis for understanding the others is the dream of the silversmith Romulus, protodeacon of the church of Gethsemane, who prays to Theodore the martyr. Theodore comes to his help only after a delay of five days because he has been occupied in the leading the soul of Sabas to its place of rest.⁵ The connection between the miracles after the death and the glorification of the saint shows that the miracles are the practical result of the *παρηγορία* granted to the fathers.⁶ The primary emphasis is always on the power of the living saint rather than his dead body.

This section has argued that Cyril set out to record the lives of those who had been the founders or distinguished members of the monasteries in which he lived. Two of the shorter lives — those

1. 78. 22 - 79. 1.

2. There are four miracle stories, 185. 17 - 187. 27.

3. 71. 9-10; 82. 16-18.

4. 82. 19-23.

5. 184. 22- 185.16.

6. e.g. 59. 9-11; 241. 4-6. For further discussion of the concept of *παρηγορία* see below, pp. 210-217.

of Theodosius and Theognius - are an exception to this. Theodosius lived among the σπουδαῖοι around the Tower of David, at the church of the Cathisma on the road from Jerusalem to Bethlehem and in the monastery of Marinus and Luke at Metopa, before establishing his own coenobium in the hills to the east of Bethlehem.¹ Theognius, on his arrival in Jerusalem, settled first in the monastery of the martyr Julian on the Mount of Olives and then moved to the coenobium of Theodosius before forming a coenobium a few miles to the south.² Neither lived in monasteries founded by Euthymius or Sabas, nor in monasteries in which Cyril had lived.

By the time Cyril wrote his Life of Theodosius there was a longer life by Theodore of Petra already in existence. Cyril refers to this work, using it as an excuse for the brevity of his own treatment of the subject since, as he says, Theodore has already written about the events of Theodosius' life.³ Theodore's account overlooks the part played by Sabas in the life of the monasteries. Both writers describe, for example, Patriarch John's profession of the Chalcedonian faith before a huge gathering of 10,000 monks (δέκα χιλιάδα) in the church of St. Stephen. Cyril attributes this act of defiance of the Emperor Anastasius to the encouragement of Sabas and Theodosius, but Theodore mentions only Theodosius.⁴ In view of this neglect of Sabas by Theodore, it has been suggested that Cyril wrote in order to present an alternative view of events in which Sabas' part is emphasised at the expense of that of Theodosius.

But this view is untenable. Not only does Cyril omit all mention of these events in which Sabas was involved in his Life of Theodosius, but when he does discuss the roles of the two saints in the Life of Sabas, he makes no attempt to argue for the superiority of Sabas. There is, it is true, the account of Sabas' playful remark to Theodosius that, while Theodosius is the superior of children, he, Sabas, is a superior of superiors, because each of

1. 236. 11-12; 236. 20-21; 237. 3-4; 237. 21-26.

2. 241. 20-21; 242. 6-7; 242. 20-21.

3. 239. 17-18.

4. 151. 7 - 152. 15. Compare Theodore of Petra, VThds 62.

the hermits, for which Sabas has responsibility as archimandrite, is superior in his own cell.¹ Further, Sabas sends his novices to Theodosius' coenobium because of the impropriety of receiving the unbearded into a laura.² But, in his account of the dramatic events at the church of St. Stephen and their aftermath, Theodosius' name is always mentioned before that of Sabas; and Theodosius proclaims the anathema on all those who do not accept the four councils as the four gospels.³ Cyril's treatment of Sabas and Theodosius' relationship does not set out to show the superiority of Sabas.

The reason for his decision to write the Lives of Theodosius and Theognius is their importance in the life of the monastic desert and their relationship with the traditions associated with Euthymius and Sabas. Both had become prominent through being the subject of biographical writing. In addition to Theodore's Life of Theodosius, a Life of Theognius by Paul of Elousa was in circulation.⁴ Cyril had read both of these books and chose to supplement the accounts by recording the evidence which he had collected.

Like Sabas, Theodosius and Theognius were Cappadocian. Sabas was from Mc^utalasca, Theodosius from Mogariassus and Theognius from Ararathia.⁵ Van den Gheyn suggests that Ararathia (Ἀραραθεία) is identical with the Ariarthia visited by Antoninus Placentinus, and that Mogariassus (Μωγαριασσός) is the same as Megalossus, a town mentioned by Ptolemy.⁶ If this is so, then Theodosius and Theognius were near neighbours.

These Cappadocians were influenced by Euthymius. Theodosius learned the 'rule of the wilderness' (τὸν τῆς ἐρήμου κανόνα) from Marinus and Luke who were early disciples of Euthymius.⁷ This places Theodosius within the Euthymian descent. Theognius was a monk at Theodosius' monastery.

1. 166. 24-26.

2. 114. 8-12; 132. 2.

3. 151. 12; 152. 4-5; 152. 15; 152. 19; 166. 5; 167. 3.

4. 243. 7-8; Paul of Elousa, V. Theognii, ed. J. van den Gheyn, An Boll 10 (1891) 78-113.

5. 86. 28; 236. 4-5; 241. 14.

6. See J. van den Gheyn 'Saint Théognius Evêque de Bételie en Palestine', RQH 50 (1891) 559-576 (p.566).

7. 16.9-16; 237.4.

Both Theodosius and Theognius were representatives of the tradition which had stemmed from Euthymius. In writing their Lives, Cyril's aim was to present a complete account of the saints of the desert. The presence of these two short works in the Cyrillian corpus - which together fill only eight out of the 243 pages of Schwartz's edition - is not sufficient to call into question Cyril's general purpose of writing the history of the individuals connected with his own monasteries.

Cyril is no objective observer. He writes with a conviction which was the product of his life as a monk. The awe in which he held senior monks in his childhood; the theological controversies into which he was precipitated as a young man; the mighty works of power which amazed him as a monk and the deep loyalty to the monasteries which housed him and formed him in the religious life - all these powerful experiences have contributed to the Lives. They are the foundation on which the structure is built. The writings are as they are because of what happened to Cyril.

2 : 4. Cyril's motives as a writer.

Cyril gives a description of how he came to write the books and prefaces the two main works with prologues in which he sets out his motives for writing. These passages provide an insight into his own understanding of his role as author.

He claims that he has taken care in building up his collection of stories about Euthymius and Sabas, but the actual process of writing he attributes to the supernatural guidance and commission given to him by his subjects.¹ While Cyril is looking over his notes and conscious of his inability to write, Euthymius and Sabas appear to him in a dream. Euthymius anoints Cyril's mouth three times with a liquid taken from an alabaster jar. The liquid is a manifestation of the divine word, looking like oil and tasting sweeter than honey. Immediately Cyril starts to write, and, in the strength of this gift of grace, completes his Life of Euthymius and continues on to that of Sabas. Cyril quotes from the Bible, — Psalm 119. 103 — and has in mind such passages as the prophet Ezekiel consuming a scroll which "tasted sweet as honey".² This event follows the series of miracle stories performed by Euthymius after his death and is understood as belonging to this sequence. Cyril wishes to claim that the writing itself is a manifestation of the power of Euthymius. Sabas says to Euthymius in the vision "Give him, father, the grace".³ Cyril himself becomes included in Euthymius' life story.

Many parallels to this vision could be quoted. It is a common motif in saints' lives to claim the authority of the saint for what is written about him. Seridus does not know how he can faithfully reproduce the words of Barsanuphius, but Barsanuphius promises him: "Go, write, do not be afraid: until I tell thee ten thousand words. The Spirit of God lets thee not write it one letter too much nor too little".⁴ There are other examples in pagan and Christian literature. Gregory the Great wrote about Abba Equitius, who was

1. 82. 30- 83. 4.

2. 84. 1-25; Ezekiel 3.3.

3. 84. 11.

4. Varsanuphius and John, Questions and Answers, ed. D.J.Chitty. (PO. 458. 28-30)

a great preacher but did not have a licence to preach from the Pope. Equitius says: "One night a beautiful youth appeared to me in a dream and, touching my tongue with a medical instrument, a lancet, said to me 'see I have put my words in your mouth; go out, go and preach'".¹ Festugière describes this motif as "le petit roman que l'auteur invente pour donner plus de prix au récit qu'il annonce".²

The prologues of the Lives of Euthymius and Sabas make an appeal for faith: faith for the author - "may faith guide my words about Euthymius"; faith for George to whom the book is dedicated - "fortify yourself in a firm faith"; and, above all, faith in the reader - that they may "disbelieve nothing of these things but lead their thoughts to acceptance through faith". This faith is possible because the accounts have been handed down to Cyril by truthful holy men (παρὰ ἀληθευόντων ἁγίων).⁴ This insistence on total acceptance by the reader is found in other authors. Usually, the more incredible the event described, the more essential is the response of faith asked for by the writer. Mark the Deacon, Theodoret and Callinicus are among the hagiographical writers who emphasise the need for faith.⁵

Cyril writes to prevent the lives of his heroes from being forgotten. He presents this intention through two clichés. The first is that of rescuing important events from the 'abyss of forgetfulness'. The form of this image is copied from the Miracles of Thekla and is repeated twice by Cyril. ὥστε ἐκ τινος βυθοῦ τοῦ μακροῦ χρόνου καὶ τῆς λήθης ἀναλεγόμενος. Other examples can be found in Evagrius Scholasticus, Theodoret and Palladius.⁷

1. Gregory the Great, Dialogues. 1.4.1-8 (SC.Vol.2. pp.38-44)
2. A.J. Festugière, 'Lieux communs littéraires et thèmes de folk-lore dans l'hagiographie primitive', WSt 73 (1960) 123 - 152 (p.123). This article contains further examples of claims for divine inspiration from pagan and Christian authors.
3. 5. 4-5; 6. 1; 5. 20-21. The Prologues are 5.1 - 6.20; 8. 13-17; 85. 20- 86. 10.
4. 6. 5.
5. Mark the Deacon, VPorph 3.2; 3.18. ed.H.Grégoire and A.Kugener (Paris 1930) p.3; Theodoret, HRel Prologue 10. 1-13 (SC Vol.1. p.140); V Hyp 130. 26. For examples of pagan writers emphasising the need for faith, see Festugiere 'Lieux communs' (pp. 124-137).
6. 6. 7-8; 86. 3-4; see VThecl 44. 8-11 (ed. Dagron, Vie et Miracles de Sainte Thècle, SH 62 (Brussels 1978) p.404.
7. Evagrius HE Prologue (Bidez, 5.20; 6.4); Palladius, H Laus Prologue. 3 (Butler 10. 10); Theodoret, HRel Prol.2 (SC Vol 1, p.126).

The second image is of the "industrious bee". He has undertaken his task like "the industrious bee collecting from many flowers what is useful for the manufacture of honey".¹ Among the many writers who have used this cliché are Theodore of Petra and John Moschus.²

Cyril has used conventional literary forms in the construction of his Prologues. But these passages also contain unexpected and original features. In his Prologue to the Life of Sabas, he undertakes to report the events accurately. "I have noted exactly times and places and persons and names" (καὶ χρόνων ἀκριβείας καὶ τόπων καὶ προσώπων καὶ ὀνομάτων).³ This is almost a quotation from the Prologue to the Miracles of Thecla, except that Basil of Seleucia's work does not refer to 'times'.⁴ Cyril has emphasised his desire for historical accuracy by deliberately adding to Basil's statement.

Other monastic writers show less interest in historical or topographical detail. Palladius, for example, writes: "We are not concerned with the place where they (the monks) settled but rather it is their way of life which we seek".⁵ His view is echoed by Athanasius. "You have in mind to model your lives after Antony's life of zeal. I too derive real profit and help from him."⁶ And Theodoret wishes to "set out the lives of the saints as a programme for those who desire to imitate them".⁷

Of course Cyril hopes his readers will benefit from his books. His Lives are intended to provide a model for the reader (- a τύπον ἀγαθὸν... τοῖς ἐντυγχάνουσιν).⁸ They are "stories profitable to the soul" (ψυχωφέλη διηγήματα).⁹ But this benefit is derived from discovering about the lives of the saints, not through the moral teaching contained in the book.¹⁰

1. 6. 2-4.

2. Theodore of Petra, VThds 13.14; John Moschus, Prat Prologue, (PG 87. 3: 2852C)

3. 86. 22-24.

4. VThecl Prologue 18-19 (SH p.284)

5. Palladius, Hlaus . Prologue (Butler 15. 3-4)

6. VAnton, Prologue (PG.26^a. 837A)

7. Theodoret, HRel 1.1. (SC Vol.1 p.162.)

8. 6. 10-11.

9. 86. 4-5.

10. For the moral lessons that can be learned from historical accounts, see H.I Marrou, Histoire de l'éducation dans l'antiquité, 2nd edn. (Paris 1948) p.126 and P.Canivet, Le monachisme syrien selon Theodoret de Cyr. Theologie Historique 42 (Paris 1977) p.65. Marrou cites Plutarch (Life of Paul 1.235) "This history is for me like a mirror in which I look at these great persons to guide and rule my life according to the example of their virtues."

There is a different emphasis in Cyril. He is concerned with reporting rather than teaching.

This makes his lives different from most early monastic literature, which is almost entirely the work of outsiders. The authors were sometimes visitors and their writing took the form of a travel diary. An important work is the Historia Monachorum in Aegypto. This was written by one of a group of seven monks from a monastery on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem who made a visit to the monks of Egypt in 394-5. The author describes the journey they took and the old men they visited. The impact of the experience on the writer is apparent from the tone of amazement and admiration which runs through the work. He wants to share the lessons learned and the inspiration received with a wider audience. Other examples of this approach are the Lausiac History of Palladius, written by a Galatian who spent several years in Egypt before becoming Bishop of Helenopolis in Bithynia; the Institutes and Conferences of John Cassian, a monk from Bethlehem who later settled in Gaul; and the Spiritual Meadow of John Moscus, which records his travels in Palestine, Egypt, Sinai, Antioch, Cyprus and Rome.¹

Other contributions to the literature about the monks come from the pens of sympathetic bishops. Antony's biographer, Athanasius, was bishop in Alexandria and had experience of doctrinal controversy at the Councils of Nicaea and Constantinople. He had tasted exile on three occasions. His Life of Antony reveals his admiration for the holy monk who spent his whole adult life in seclusion in the desert of Egypt. The motives of Theodoret in writing the Religious History are similar. The embattled bishop, caught up in Christological controversy, looks longingly at the ascetics of the mountains of his native Syria, a group of men with whom he had once had close links but from which the demands of his position in the church had distanced him.

1. See Bibliography for further details of the works mentioned in this paragraph.

In contrast, Cyril writes as an Insider. He is a Resident not a Visitor. There is no suggestion that he ever travelled outside Palestine.¹ He writes about his homeland, at a time when his two main heroes had died. He had no store of ascetical teaching learned from them to pass on to others. In this situation the accurate reporting of historical detail gains a new importance. Oral traditions and written sources take the place of the personal reminiscence of the visitor.

1. Suggestions to the contrary, such as the statement of R.V.Sellers (Council of Chalcedon (London 1961) p.305) that Cyril was one of the Scythian monks who visited Constantinople in the reign of Justinian, have no basis in fact.

Chapter Three.

THE SOURCES AND STRUCTURE OF CYRIL'S WRITING.

3 : 1. The structure of the Lives.

The Lives of Euthymius and Sabas are part of the same historical project. Cyril makes this close relationship between the two lives clear. He says that he began to collect material about Euthymius but discovered that those monks who were best informed about the traditions of the life of Euthymius had also been the contemporaries of and fellow-strugglers with Sabas (συγχρόνους τε καὶ συναγωνιστὰς).¹ The result of his researches was a disordered mixture of notes about the lives of both Saints gathered together on bits of paper.² This process of collection was taking place by 553, since Cyril refers to the Fifth Ecumenical Council 'now' meeting at Constantinople (διὰ τῆς νῦν παναθροισθείσης συνόδου).³ There was a lapse of at least two years before Cyril started to write the books, for this took place at the New Laura which he entered in 555. Both Euthymius and Sabas appeared to Cyril and both works were addressed to the priest George.⁴ The two Lives belong together, the Life of Sabas being anticipated in the Life of Euthymius. They are the first and second 'word' (λόγος) respectively.⁵

The result of the vision which initiated the committing of Cyril's researches to book form was that the miscellaneous notes were ordered into a clear and coherent structure. An analysis of the two books reveals that Cyril has fitted the Lives of both men into a common pattern. The recognition of the sections which make up the books will help to understand how Cyril has used his sources, how he presents the part played by the Saints in the history of the church and how the institution of Palestinian monasticism developed. It is a necessary preliminary to an assessment of Cyril's writing.

1. 82.30-83.2.

2. 83.5-7.

3. 179.6-7.

4. 84.3-4; 5.2; 85.8.

5. 84.24; 86.11.

The five shorter Lives - of John the Hesychast, Cyriac, Theodosius, Theognius and Abraamios - fit less easily into the pattern. The Life of John marks the beginning of a new enterprise.

πρῶτον προτίθημι τῷ λόγῳ τὸν ἀρχαῖον Ἰωάννην...¹

Usener suggests that this collection was left unfinished, and among the unwritten sections is the preface which would have preceded the Life of John and which would have indicated the relationship of these works with the earlier two lives.² The discontinuity of the Life of John with the earlier lives should not be exaggerated. Cyril has already been looking forward to writing John's life in the course of the Life of Sabas.³ His enthusiasm for his task of writing has an inherent dynamism in it making him plan the next stages of the histories while still engrossed in those which went before.

1. 201.4.

2. H.Usener, Der heilige Theodosios (Leipzig 1890) p.xviii.

3. 105.26-106.3.

An analysis of the structure of the Lives of Euthymius and Sabas.

	<u>Life of Euthymius</u>	<u>Life of Sabas.</u>
Prologue	5.1-8.20	85.5-86.27
Birth, including reference to Samuel to show divine foreknowledge.	8.21-10.4	86.28-87.19
Childhood, including anecdotes to show the child as an exemplary monk.	10.5-13.27	87.20-90.4.
Pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and movement to the desert.	13.28-14.21	90.5-93.11
The saint leaves the monastery to enjoy the solitude of the desert.	14.22-16.24	93.12-95.5
Ascetic teaching of Euthymius	16.25-18.11	95.6-99.4
Sabas' victory over Devils	18.12-21.19	99.5-101.5
The first disciples.	21.20-23.3	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="flex: 1; border-left: 1px solid black; margin: 0 5px;"></div> <div style="flex: 1; border-left: 1px solid black; margin: 0 5px;"></div> <div style="flex: 1; border-left: 1px solid black; margin: 0 5px;"></div> <div style="flex: 1; border-left: 1px solid black; margin: 0 5px;"></div> <div style="flex: 1; border-left: 1px solid black; margin: 0 5px;"></div> <div style="flex: 1; border-left: 1px solid black; margin: 0 5px;"></div> <div style="flex: 1; border-left: 1px solid black; margin: 0 5px;"></div> <div style="flex: 1; border-left: 1px solid black; margin: 0 5px;"></div> <div style="flex: 1; border-left: 1px solid black; margin: 0 5px;"></div> <div style="flex: 1; border-left: 1px solid black; margin: 0 5px;"></div> </div>
Euthymius flees to find solitude	23.4-23.17	
Euthymius' victory over Devils	23.18-28.8	
Foundation of the laura (accompanied by miraculous signs)	28.9-32.6	
Anecdotes about monks	32.7-33.31	
Stories about the monastery	34.1-39.17	
The theme of conflict over doctrine is introduced. Sabas flees	39.18-45.4	
The virtues of Euthymius = foundations of Sabas	45.5-47.4	
Anecdotes about monks		
Doctrinal conflict. Euthymius flees		
The virtues of Euthymius = foundations of Sabas.		
Sabas' first visit to Scythopolis		<u>162.20-166.2</u>
Stories about Sabas		<u>166.3-171.26</u>
Imperial meetings (Euthymius and Eudocia; Sabas and Justinian)	47.5-49.22	171.27-178.19
Stories	49.23-53.4	178.20-179.25

Sabas at Scythopolis		<u>179.26-182.2.</u>
Deaths and burials of saints.	53.5-62.2	182.3-184.22
Miracles after the death		184.23-187.29
Historical - the doctrinal conflict is resolved	62.3-68.2	187.30-200.17
Miracles after the death	68.3-82.12	
The composition of the book	<u>82.13-85.3</u>	

Notes on the analysis.

- (i) Sections in one Life for which there are no parallel in the other are underlined. Three of these contain autobiographical material (82.13-85.3; 162.20-166.20; 179.26-182.2). There are only two other sections, both from the longer Life of Sabas, which have no parallel in the Life of Euthymius. These are included because Cyril has more material about Sabas.
- (ii) Sections from the Lives which are parallel but placed in a different position are indicated. These are, first, the collections of anecdotes, drawn, presumably, from the treasury of improving stories common throughout the ancient monastic world and having little secure basis in the lives of Euthymius or Sabas. Second, the miracles accomplished after the death of the saint and the historical conclusion to the events of the life appear in a different order. Third, the section describing Euthymius' travels and his foundation of a monastery at Caparbaricha (22.12-23.14) is equivalent to Sabas' flight from the Great Laura and his founding of a monastery at Gadara, near Scythopolis (119.15-120.13).
- (iii) A theme running through both lives is the involvement in doctrinal controversy. Euthymius' opponents are the Aposchists; Sabas' are the λογίῳτες who later manifest themselves in their true Origenist colours. Both saints at first have

recourse to flight to more distant and deserted places (118.28-121.22; 44.18-45.4); then gain the support of the Imperial authorities. Euthymius' support comes from Eudocia (48.7-49.22) and the Imperial connection is further emphasised by Cyril's placing Justinian's theological views in Euthymius' mouth (see below p. 82). Sabas' support is gained through a series of interviews with first Anastasius and then Justinian. The conflicts are only finally resolved after the death of the saint.

- (iv) The passages in the Life of Sabas which are equivalent to those which describe Euthymius' ascetic virtues, are the descriptions of Sabas' monastic foundations. These achievements are the means by which the church is maintained.
- (v) Miracle stories occur at every stage. They form an integral part of every section of the narratives.

The correspondences and contrasts presented by this analysis will be explored further in due course.

3.2. Literary sources.

Cyril describes how "old men from Egypt" (πρὸς γέροντες Αἴγυπτοι) had passed on their stories to Euthymius who used them in his own teaching.¹ He draws a parallel between Sabas' conflicts with the devils and those of Antony of Egypt, saying that "he who appeared to the great Antony showed himself also to him (Sabas) to give strength."² The respect that Palestinian monks had for Antony is also shown by the celebration of his feast-day in Euthymius' monastery.³ These are signs of a much larger process by which words, ideas and stories are transmitted across the Mediterranean Roman world. Peter Brown has referred to the concept of 'Romania', the Mediterranean as a Roman lake and the transmission of culture by a process of 'osmosis'.⁴

The lives of the saints quickly become known over a wide area. The speed with which this process of transmission happened is shown by the popularity of Sulpicius Severus' Life of Martin. It was written between 393, when Martin died, and 397, when Paulinus of Nola wrote to thank Sulpicius Severus for sending him a copy of the work. In a letter written about 403, Paulinus describes a visit of Melania the Elder to Nola on her way to Rome at which he read to her from the Life.⁵ By 404, Sulpicius Severus claimed that the Life was being read at Carthage, Cyrene, Alexandria, Nitria, the Thebaid and Memphis.⁶ Since Melania the Elder knew the book, he could before long have added Jerusalem to his list.⁷

Cyril did not know the Martinian literature, but his dependence on other hagiographical works is extensive and complex.⁸

D.J.Chitty recognised the importance of research into these literary relationships. "His (Cyril's) works have yet to be fully explored

1. 36.31. cf 30.28-29.

2. 110.15-16.

3. 57. 23-24.

4. P.Brown (Eastern and Western Christendom, p6) is developing an idea of H.Pirenne cited in J.M.Petersen, The Dialogues of Gregory the Great in their late Antique cultural background (Toronto 1984) p.xx.

5. Paulinus of Nola. Ep 2.11, 29.14.

6. Sulpicius Severus, Dialogues. 1.26. 178-9 (PL 20: 200B-D).

7. Petersen, Dialogues of Gregory the Great, p.103.

8. Such similarities as there are are commonplaces of hagiographical writing and cannot establish literary dependence. For example, Euthymius' authority over devils and Martin's over birds. 23.14-16 and Sulpicius Severus, Ep 3.7-8 (PL 20:182)

as a mine of quotations from earlier works - the Vita Antonii the Vita Pachomii, the Apophthegmata Patrum, etc."¹ Research of this kind was already in progress when Chitty wrote and has been continued since then. The following studies have explored further examples of literary dependence.

- W.Bousset: Apophthegmata. Textüberlieferung und Charakter der Apophthegmata Patrum (Tubingen 1923) p.67-8 (for Apophthegmata Patrum).
- P.Devos: 'Cyrille de Scythopolis. Influences littéraires, vêtement de l'évêque de Jerusalem, Passarion et Pierre l'Ibère', AnBoll 98 (1980) 25-38, 386-388 (for Theodoret, Gregory of Nazianzus and a miracle of Menas).
- R.Draguet: 'Réminiscences de Pallade chez Cyrille de Scythopolis' RAM 98-100(1948) 213-8 (for Palladius, Lausiac History).
- A.J.Festugiere: Collections grêques de miracles. Sainte Thècle; Saints Côme et Damien; Saint Georges(Paris 1971)p.79-8 (for Life and Miracles of Thecla).
- G.Garitte: 'Réminiscences de la vie d'Antoine dans Cyrille de Scythopolis' in Silloge Bizantina in onore di Silvio Giuseppe Mercati (Rome 1957) p.117-122 (for the Life of Antony).
- G.C.Hansen: Theodoros Anagnostes, Kirchengeschichte. GCS (Berlin 1971) p.x-xxi (For Theodore Lector).
- A.Guillaumont: Les 'Kephalala Gnostica' d'Evagre le Pontique et l'histoire de l'origenisme chez les Grecs et chez les Syriens Patristica Sorbonensia 5. (Paris 1962) p.124-170 (for Origenist texts).
- E.Schwartz: Kyrrillos von Scythopolis (Leipzig 1939) p.362 (for Justinian's theological writings).

These separate researches have been collected together and considerably expanded by B.Flusin. He states his aim as "reprendre et compléter cette recherche avec un double but: montrer que les emprunts, chez Cyrille, sont plus étendus qu'on ne le suppose généralement; nous servir des résultats de cette analyse pour mieux situer l'oeuvre de Cyrille."² Flusin lists over 120 places

1. D.J.Chitty, The Desert a City (Oxford 1966) p.131.
2. MH,p.43. The parallels are collected on pp.43-86.

where it is likely that Cyril has copied from or been influenced directly by the work of an earlier author. His work contains some distastes of detail and omission, but nevertheless provides a full and helpful collection of evidence.¹

In his conclusion to his consideration of Cyril and his sources, Flusin writes: "Le dossier que nous avons réuni est sans doute incomplet".² The comparison of texts with the purpose of discovering parallel passages is bound to involve personal judgment and selection. Each researcher will produce a different list. Here are several further passages which should be regarded as signs of Cyril's dependence on the tradition.

1. James of Nisibis becomes a bishop.

Ἐναλλάξας δὲ τὴν ὄρειον ἐκείνην
διατριβὴν... οὔτε τὴν τροφὴν
οὔτε τὴν ἀμπεχόνην ἐνέλλαξεν.
... ἡ δὲ πολιτεία μεταβολὴν οὐκ
ἔδεχετο (Theodoret, HRel. 1.7.4-7)

John the Hesychast.

καὶ οὕτως τὴν
ἀρχιερωσύνην ἀκουσως
δεξάμενος τὸν κανόνα
τῆς μοναχικῆς πολιτείας
οὐκ ἐνέλλαξεν (202.22-24)

2. ἐξηγωνίζετο τα πάντα ἐν
ἑαυτῷ κατέχειν ταπεινοφροσύνην
καὶ πραυτητι καὶ ἀληθείᾳ, ὡς
λόγος ὁ κυρίου, Μάθετε ἀπ'
ἐμοῦ ὅτι πρᾶός εἰμι καὶ ταπεινὸς
τῇ καρδίᾳ (VPachG' 14.16)

εἶχεν γὰρ πραότητα πολλήν
καὶ ταπεινοφροσύνην
ἀληθινήν μιμούμενος ἐν τούτῳ
Χριστὸν... φήσαντα, Μάθετε ἀπ'
ἐμοῦ ὅτι πρᾶός εἰμι καὶ ταπεινός
τῇ καρδίᾳ (100.15-19)

οὕτως ἀρχὴ λογισμοῦ
φιλαρχίας ὁ κληρὸς. (VPachG' 34.7)

τῆς φιλαρχίας ἀρχὴ καὶ
ρίζα ἐστὶν τῶν λογισμῶν
ἢ τοῦ κληρωθῆναι ἐπιθυμία
(102. 20-21)

1. For example, he claims to add two references to Garitte's list of parallels with the Life of Antony, one of which is in fact included by Garitte (Compare the reference to 53.11-15 on MH p.45, with Garitte, 'Réminiscences' (p.119) He points correctly to Cyril's dependence in 6.4-8 on Miracles of Thecla, 4.4-11 (ed.Dagron, p.404) but neglects to mention the use of the same passage in 86.1-4.
2. MH, p.83.

4. ἐξαβούμενος ἀποδύσασθαι,
ἵνα μὴ γυμνὸν αὐτὸν ἴδῃ
(H Laus Butler 29.102)

ἐξαβούμενος ... μὴ αὐτὸν
γυμνὸν θεωρεῖν
(202.26-27)

5. A list of nine Pachomian
foundations (vpachG¹.112).

The list of seven Sabaite
foundations has the monasteries
of Euthymius and Theoktistos
added to bring the total number
to nine. (158.20-159.2)

The literary relationship which has been least satisfactorily treated is that between Cyril and Palladius. It might seem surprising that Cyril should have known and used the writing of Palladius, a self-confessed admirer of Evagrius and the writer of a work influenced by him, but there are several passages which clearly reveal dependance.¹ The article of R. Draguet on the relationship of Cyril and Palladius listed nine parallel passages, "attestant une dépendance de Cyrille vis-à-vis de Pallade".² Flusin is rightly critical of this list and is prepared to accept three as established, one as doubtful and five as insufficiently close to be used as evidence of dependance.³ He went on to note that, of the three convincing references, two come from Palladius' chapter about Macarius the Egyptian, and both occur in the same section of Cyril's writing.⁴ These conclusions would not establish that Cyril had used the Lausiac History in its entirety but only one chapter (and the prologue), with the result that Palladius could no longer be regarded as a significant influence. However these lists of parallels can be substantially extended. Further suggested borrowings are noted on pp 77-78 and on p. 81. These do show that Palladius has had a greater influence on Cyril than has previously been thought.

It is also interesting to note which works Cyril does not appear to have used. For example, Mark the Deacon's Life of Porphyry

1. For the Evagrian influence on Palladius, see R. Draguet 'L'histoire lausique, une oeuvre écrite dans l'esprit d'Evagre', RHE 41(1946) 351-364.
2. Draguet, 'Réminiscences de Pallade' (p.217).
3. MH, pp. 43-44
4. 78.12-13; 79.6-8.

written in the early fifth century in Gaza, and Gerontius' Life of Melania, written in the late fifth century in Jerusalem, must have been available to Cyril, but there is no sign that he has used these books.

In some places there is a significantly different turn of phrase revealing a lack of dependence. Compare, for example, Cyril's expression "ὁ δὲ λέων ὑπὸ τῆς εὐχῆς τοῦ γερόντος ὡς ὑπὸ μάστιγος διωκόμενος," with that of Athanasius' Life of Antony "ἔφυγον ἐκεῖναι ὡς ὑπὸ μάστιγος τοῦ λόγου διωκόμεναι." In the Historia Monachorum, the prayers of Abba Bes put a hippopotamus to flight "ὡς ὑπὸ ἀγγέλου ἐλασθεῖς".¹ Cyril's choice of phrase suggests not only that he knew the Life of Antony but also that he did not know the Historia Monachorum.

The existence of the substantial number of occasions when Cyril has borrowed from earlier authors has been established. But these borrowings differ in nature. Several different kinds of influence can usefully be distinguished.

First, there are the occasions when Cyril has copied a passage. Only two quotations are acknowledged, both of which are from works by Gregory of Nazianzus. The first is a comparison between the young Basil and King David, which Cyril applies to Euthymius, and is introduced by the words "Gregory the theologian says" (ὡς φησὶν ὁ θεολόγος Γρηγόριος).² The second is in introduction to a discussion of Origenist opinions.³ The number of unacknowledged quotations is far larger. For example, Cyril quotes Gregory's Elogium on Basil a second time in the same section of his Life of Euthymius, with no reference to the source.⁴ In spite of the lack of acknowledgment, Cyril seems to have had the text in front of him and to have copied phrases or whole sentences out of it. His use of these authors is limited to the specific phrases he has borrowed

1. 107.14-15, compare 119.27-28. VAnton 52. (PG26:920A). H Mon Bes. 1.14. compare Epilogue 13. (SH pp.53,138)
2. 12.2. compare Gregory of Nazianzus, Elogium on Basil 12.1, in Gregoire de Nazianze, Discours funèbres en l'honneur de son frère Césaire et de Basile de Césarée, ed Boulenger (Paris 1908) p.80-82.
3. 229.27-28, compare Gregory of Nazianzus, Or. 2.1. (PG 36:25)
4. 12.25-13.2, compare Gregory of Nazianzus, Elogium 20.4. (Boulenger, p.102).

and he does not seem to be influenced by their general use of vocabulary, stories or theological opinions.

An example of an author used in this way is Nilus of Ancyra. Cyril has copied from his De Monastica exercitatione on four occasions, two of which occur in the Prologue to the Life of Euthymius and two in a passage describing the virtues of Sabas as a superior.¹ There are no other examples of borrowings from Nilus. It seems that Cyril was struck by Nilus' opinions about leadership within a monastic community and incorporated this element only. Basil of Seleucia's Life and Miracles of Thecla is also used in this way. All these authors are from Syria or Asia Minor.²

Cyril's use of Theodoret's Religious History is more complex. The number of parallel passages is larger and, although these include clear cases of direct copying,³ there are also signs that Theodore's understanding of the spiritual life has influenced Cyril. In particular, the concept of παρηγορία as the goal of the ascetic path has been learned by Cyril in part from Theodoret.⁴ The respect that Cyril had for Theodoret's writing is shown by omission of Theodoret's name from Cyril's account of the theologians anathematised at the 553 Council of Constantinople.⁵ Theodoret was a major source used by Cyril.

In spite of the extent of Theodoret's influence, it can be concluded that the literature of Syria and Asia Minor was mainly used by Cyril as a source of quotation which he copied directly.

The second form of influence is less direct. It is illustrated especially by the use Cyril has made of Egyptian sources. These parallels are not examples of close verbal similarity which would have

1. MH, p.70. PG 79: 721 CD equivalent to 78.18-24; 724.A=8.3; 760.C=99.11-17; 129.17-21; 760 D=192.21.

2. MH, p.53-4.

3. Flusin finds nineteen. . . For an example of direct copying, compare 39.20-30 and HRel 3.16.1-9. (SC Vol.1 pp.276-278).

4. HRel 15.8-9, compare HRel 1.3.7-8 (SC Vol.1.p.164) Other passages of HRel which have contributed to Cyril's concept of παρηγορία not mentioned by Flusin are 1.14.2; 3.9.2; 7.3.23; 8.15.11-13; 9.7.7; 13.5.10; 13.8.8; 18.4.13.

5. 119.3-6.

resulted from copying. The parallel passages are far more numerous and varied. They include cases where a similar phrase is used, like the phrase that monks have 'made the desert into a city' (ἡ ἔρημος ἐπολίεθ' ὑπὸ μοναχῶν)¹; where a story has been used to teach an aspect of monastic observance, as when Cyril uses a tale from the Apophthegmata Patrum to illustrate the charismatic gift of discernment of spirits;² where the ascetic virtues of an Egyptian desert father have been used as a source for describing the conduct of a Palestinian saint, especially in the comparison of Arsenius and Euthymius;³ and where Cyril has modelled a complete section on an Egyptian source, as when the Prologue of the Life of Euthymius is based on a section of the Life of Pachomius describing how ascetics are faithful to the tradition of Christian witness descending through the apostles and martyrs.⁴

The extent to which Egyptian ascetic traditions penetrated the Judaeian desert can scarcely be over-emphasised. L. Régnault has shown that the Apophthegmata Patrum were being read in Palestine in the fourth and fifth centuries. He also points out that, while the shorter collections on specific subjects contain only sayings attributed to Egyptian monks, the systematic and alphabetical collections contain stories of Palestinian monks as well. "On est donc fortement tenté de supposer que la première collection de type alphabético-anonyme a été formée en Palestine plutôt qu'en Egypte".⁵

The third form of influence shows itself in Cyril's narrative style. The previous two types of influence have been in the content of Cyril's writing. This is in the form. His presentation of material stands in a tradition of narrative writing. This

1. 126.15; 158.17-18, compare VAnton 14 (PG 26:865 B).
2. 37.1-20, compare a story from the Apoph Patr in Nau, 'Anonymous Collection', ROC 13 (1908) 266-297 (p.279)
3. 34.17-24, compare the phrases from the Apophthegmata collected in MH p.56. For influence of Arsenius, see 1 Hausherr, Penthos (Kalamazoo Michigan 1982) p.33.
4. 6-8, compare VPachG1 1-2. (Athamassakis p.2-4)
5. L. Régnault 'Les apophthegmes des peres en Palestine aux V^e-VI^e siècles'. Iren 54(1981) 320-330 (p.328).
Note also D.J. Chitty's remark (The Desert a City, p131) that Cyril's writing is 'roughly contemporary with the early Latin versions of the Apophthegmata Patrum, while the earliest Syriac MS of a collection of these comes from the year of St. Sabas' death'.

derives primarily from the Bible, as is shown by a comparison of Cyril's description of shepherds witnessing Sabas' victory over the devils on the hill of Castellion and the well-known passage about the shepherds being told of the birth of Jesus. The dependence of Cyril on the Biblical story is clear when the two passages are set out in parallel:

καὶ ποιμένες ἦσαν ἀγρυπνῶντες
καὶ φυλάσσοντες... ἐπὶ τὴν
ποίμνην αὐτῶν
ἐφοβήθησαν φόβον μέγαν...
οἱ ποιμένες ἐλάλουν πρὸς
ἀλλήλους, Διέλθωμεν δὴ
ἕως βηθλεεμ καὶ ἴδωμεν
τὸ ῥῆμα τοῦτο τὸ γεγονός
(Luke 2.8-15)

καὶ ποιμένες ἦσαν...
ἀγρυπνοῦτες καὶ φυλάσσοντες
τὴν ἑαυτῶν ποίμνην...
λίαν φοβηθέντες...
ἐλέγον πρὸς ἀλλήλους...
ἀλλὰ διέλθωμεν δὴ
ἕως τοῦ βουνοῦ καὶ ἴδωμεν
τί τὸ γεγονός... καὶ προσκυνήσωμεν
αὐτούς. (111.5-11)

There seems to be no motive for this parallel. Cyril's knowledge of the Bible has influenced his style, and shaped the way he tells the story. Many other sections of his writings remind us of passages of the Bible. These include the healing by Sabas of the woman with a haemorrhage and the miraculous feeding of a crowd of four hundred Armenians.¹ A further example of the effect of the Bible on narrative is found in the Life of Theodore of Sykeon.² The writer describes how a woman who has suffered for ten years from an issue of blood mingles with the crowd in order to come close to Theodore and to pour myrrh on his feet, which leads to her healing.

Cyril's narratives derive from hagiographical literature as well as from the Bible. As illustrations of this, here are four stories of Cyril compared with similar examples from Palladius' Lausiac History:

1. 163.23-164.10, compare Acts.3.6. and Matthew 9.22.
27.5-28.8, compare 2 Kings 7.14; 4.44; 7.14;
Matthew 15.37; 2 Corinthians 9.6; Hebrews 13.2, the
last two of which are quoted directly.
2. Life of Theodore of Sykeon 96, ed. Festugière, SHG, 48
vol.1, pp.78.16-79.3.

1. Elias' vision of the death of the Emperor Anastasius, emphasising that the vision occurred at the same time as the event.

ταύτη τῇ ὥρᾳ ἐτελεύτησεν
Ἀναστασίας (161.18)

2. Sabas discovers the dead body of Anthimus, over which angels have sung (133.10-134.6)

3. Paul the superior of the New Laura is described as ἀπλουστατον on two occasions (124.13 and 23)

4. Elias builds a monastery for scattered monks:

Ἡλίας ᾠκοδόμησεν μοναστήριον
...καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ περισυνήγαγεν
τοὺς τῆς ἐγίας Ἀναστασίας
σπουδαίους ... κελλῖα ἑκάστῳ
αὐτῶν διανείμας πᾶσαν
σωματικὴν ἀνάπαυσιν ἔχοντα
παράδεισίων (116.4-8,25)

Didymus' vision of the Emperor Julian's death.

σήμερον ἐβδόμην
ἐτελεύτησεν Ἰουλιανός

(HLaus. Butler p.20.19)

Palladius and others discover the dead body of Alexandra, with similar signs of divine approval of the departed. (HLaus. Butler. 21)

Paul the disciple of Antony is ἄκακος καὶ ἄπλοῦς...λίαν ἀπλοῦς (HLaus. Butler 69:73.5; 74.15,19)

Ἡλίας ᾠκοδόμησε μέγα,
μοναστήριον καὶ συνήγαγε
πᾶσας τὰς ἀλωμένας ἐν τοῖς
ἀκολουθῶσι αὐτῶν φροντίζων,
ποιήσας αὐταῖς ἀνάπαυσιν
πᾶσαν καὶ κήτους
καὶ χρηστήρια...συνήγαγε
γὰρ ὡς τριακοσίας.
(H Laus. Butler 84)

In these examples, it seems that a name or an event has sparked off an association in Cyril's mind with a passage of a book which he has read. His memory of this passage influences the way he narrates the event concerned.

Quotation; the sharing in a common tradition; formation of narrative style are three forms of Cyril's relationship with other authors. The distinctions between the three obviously cannot

be pressed too closely. The purpose of this threefold division suggested here is to point to the variety and complexity of the influence of other authors on Cyril. It is not intended as an infallible system of classification.

Influence from literary sources is stronger in some sections of Cyril's writing than others. This table shows the uneven distribution of the borrowings between the Life of Euthymius, the Life of Sabas and the five shorter Lives.

	Euthymius (85 pages in Schwartz)	Sabas (115 pages)	Others (46 pages)	Total
Life of Antony	11	6	9	26
Religious History	15	3	3	21
Apophthegmata Patrum	13	1	3	17
Lausiac History	3	4	2	9
Life of Pachomius	4	5	1	10
Life and Miracles of Thecla	5	1	-	6
Nilus of Ancyra	2	2	-	4
Gregory of Nazianzus	2	-	1	3
Theodore of Petra	2	-	-	2
Paul of Elousa	1	-	-	1
	58	22	19	99

The Life of Euthymius - which is shorter than the Life of Sabas - contains the largest number of borrowings. Cyril wrote his Lives sometime around 553. At that time Euthymius had been dead for eighty years.¹ Of Cyril's informants, only Cyriac, who died in 556 or 557 at the huge age of 107, had actually known Euthymius.² Even he had had only the briefest of personal acquaintances. He had visited and

1. Euthymius died in 473. See 59.22-60.8.

2. Cyriac died in the 107th year of his life, and was born on 8th January 449 (223.5-6; 234.30) So he died at the end of 556 or the first few days of 557.

received the monastic habit from the old man but had not been allowed to stay in the laura because of his unbearded face.¹ For his information about Euthymius, Cyril had to rely on oral tradition rather than eye-witness reports. In the absence of historical evidence, Cyril drew from the monastic sources in building a picture of the person and life of the saint.² The distribution of borrowings between the work shows that he used written sources from the monastic tradition when his oral sources failed him.

Distribution of borrowings within the works leads to further conclusions about Cyril's use of sources. They occur within two types of material.

First, Cyril relies on written sources in the construction of his introductory prologues. His introduction to the Life of Euthymius is modelled on the Prologue to the Life of Pachomius, and, in addition to two quotations from Nilus of Ancyra and one from the Miracles of Thecla, draws on passages of Justinian's dogmatic writings for statements on the nature of the godhead.³ The Prologue to the Life of Sabas contains two long quotations from the Miracles of Thecla.⁴ The introductory sections to the Lives of John the Hesychast and Cyriac use material from Gregory of Nazianzus, the Life of Antony and the Religious History.⁵ Cyril introduced his Lives with carefully constructed prologues which draw on earlier works both for the structure of the passage and the wording of certain sections.

Cyril's second and main use of earlier writers is as a source for his sections of ascetic teaching. Chitty wrote: "We have little impression of originality in Cyril's personal religion."⁶ This

1. 224.22-23.

2. For a similar but far more extensive use of the Life of Euthymius by a later writer, see J.Gill 'The Life of Stephen the Deacon by Stephen the Younger'. OrChrP 6(1940) 114-139.

3. 6-8; with parallels listed in MH, pp.48, 54, 70-71, 74-76.

4. 85.12-86.26; with parallels in MH, pp.70-71.

5. 201.4-20; 222.21-223.30; with parallels in MH, pp.67, 73, and Garitte 'Réminiscences de la vie d'Antoine' (p.120).

6. D.J.Chitty, The Desert a City, p.131.

verdict is confirmed when we realise how extensively he has drawn on other writers in his construction of relevant passages. Ascetic teaching is found mainly in the Life of Euthymius. He is presented as delivering an ascetic discourse.¹ This short section contains two references to the Life of Pachomius, two to the Life of Antony and two to the Religious History.² The instruction delivered to the monks on the occasion of Maron and Klematios desiring to leave the monastery refers mainly to the Apophthegmata Patrum (5 times) but also the Lausiak History, the Religious History, and Paul of Elousa.³ Other passages which present either ascetic teaching or descriptions of the ascetic achievements of the saint, and which use other works as sources are the comparison of Euthymius with Arsenius influenced by the Apophthegmata Patrum;⁴ the story of Aemilianus, illustrating Euthymius' gift of discernment influenced by the Life of Antony and Apophthegmata Patrum;⁵ Sabas' ascetic struggles influenced by the Life of Pachomius and Nilus of Ancyra;⁶ the story of Sabas' discovery of an anchorite in a cave influenced by the Apophthegmata Patrum;⁷ and Sabas' struggles against devils on the hill of Castellion which are compared to those of Antony, influenced greatly by the Life of Antony.⁸ More than a half of all borrowings by Cyril from monastic sources occur in the relatively few passages which contain ascetic teaching or description of ascetic achievement.

In Cyril's mind, ascetic achievement is inseparable from doctrinal purity. Theodosius, we are told, is conspicuous for three virtues. The first of these is "a very rigorous (ἀκριβέστατην) ascesis with a true and orthodox faith which remained from youth until old age".⁹ Ascesis and orthodoxy are seen here as forming one virtue. Euthymius' calling is to encourage the churches of God.¹⁰ He does this by his ascetic struggle and by his courageous witness to truth. This double aspect of

1. 17.4-18.11.

2. MH, pp 44-47, 68-69; Garitte, 'Réminiscences de la vie d'Antoine', pp.118-119.

3. 29.27-32.5; parallels in Flusin; MH, pp.44,56-59,68-70.

4. 34.1-30, compare MH, p.56

5. 36.13037.29, compare MH, p.59; Garitte 'Réminiscences' (p.119)

6. 99.5-101.5; compare MH, pp.46,68,71.

7. 107.23-109.2; compare MH, p.57.

8. 110.1-111.5; compare Garitte 'Réminiscences' (pp.119-120).

9. 238.25-26. His other virtues are hospitality towards the poor and foreigners, and ceaseless prayer in the divine liturgy.

10. 9.8.

his vocation is emphasised by Cyril when he places Euthymius' rejection of the Council of Ephesus alongside the comparison of Euthymius and Arsenius.¹ There is as little originality in the passages which expand dogmatic teaching as there is in those which expand ascetic teaching. There are five main passages which contain doctrinal statements - the Prologue to the Life of Euthymius; the passage describing Euthymius' zeal in combatting heresy; Euthymius' defence of the Council of Chalcedon; Sabas' conversion of two Nestorian monks; and Cyriac's exposure of the errors of Origenism.² These passages contain statements of the theological position which Cyril supports. Euthymius' defence of Chalcedon is taken from the Acts of the Council. This includes a quotation from Cyril of Alexandria "not that the difference in nature is abolished by the union", which is found in the Acts of the Council from which Cyril derived it.³ Other passages from the Lives of Euthymius and Sabas depend on Justinian's theological writings, as Schwartz pointed out in his historical commentary on Cyril.⁴ Flusin has expanded Schwartz's comments and discovered points of similarity between Cyril and four of Justinian's treatises, the Troparium ὁ μονογενής, the Contra Monophysitas, the Confessio Fidel and the Edictum contra Originem.⁵ Of these the dependence on the Confessio Fidel is closest. Cyril is concerned to support the theological positions approved by the Emperor.⁶

The sources for Cyriac's attack on Origenism are less clear. There are close verbal parallels with the 15 anathematisms issued by the 553 Council of Constantinople, but Cyril gives the extra detail not contained in the anathematisms that Origenists believe that in the apocatastasis souls would have the power to create worlds.⁷ Flusin suggests other anti-Origenist works which use similar expressions to those of Cyril - although none of these are as close as the Anathematisms.

1. 32.6-33.31; 34.1-30.

2. 6.21-7.15; 39.18-41.3 (a passage which imitates HRel5.2.16-17 (SC Vol.1 p.330); 42.23-44.4; 127.19-24; 229.31-231.19.

3. 43.10; 43.23; 44.1-4. Compare ACO 2.1. p.325.30-32.

4. See Kyrillos, p.362.

5. MH. pp.74-76.

6. See below p 267.

7. 230.7. Festugiere here translates δημιουργεῖν as 'create' at 230.7 but 'govern' at 230.9. (MO.3/3. p.47) For the history of these anathematisms, see Fr. Diekamp, Die origenistischen streitigkeiten im sechsten jahrhundert (Munster 1899) pp.88-97.

8. MH, pp.76-83.

If the 15 Anathematisms are to be rejected as Cyril's source, then it has to be assumed that Cyril used another document which has since been lost.¹ Cyril refers to three documents which could have acted as sources. Sophronius and Gelasius, successors to Theodosius and Sabas respectively, composed a libellus against the Origenists which Peter Archbishop of Jerusalem sent to Constantinople.² Later some of Cyril's companions wrote a refutation of the Origenist sects of the Isochristes and Tetradites.³ And Conan the superior of the Great Laura addressed a libellus to the Emperor Justinian.⁴ These were all written between 543 and 553 and show that there were documents attacking Origenism circulating in Palestine at the time that Cyril was writing. Flusin, on the basis of the similarity of the words used in describing the composition of the second of these two documents with Cyriac's intention in making his attack, considers that to be the most likely possibility.⁵

Cyril's ascetic and doctrinal passages have been considered together. This is because in both sections Cyril has used written sources in constructing his account. Also, as has been noted, both themes are closely connected in his own mind. These passages can be distinguished from the historical sections which depend more on oral traditions. This distinction, although useful for the purposes of understanding how he has constructed his books, is not one which would be familiar to Cyril. The saint's ascetic struggles and his witness to truth are shown as the events of his life are described.

1. See A.Guillaumont, Les 'Kephalaia Gnostica' d'Evagre le Pontique, p.151.
2. 189.13-190.14.
3. 197.10-13.
4. 198.14-17.
5. 197.10-12; 230.2-3. See MH. p.83.

3 : 3. Oral sources.

Cyril shares with other writers of saints' lives both a dependance on monks, and others, who have remembered the events described, and also a desire to make clear to his readers from whom he has received his information. Emphasis on the reliability of the witness is a way of affirming the reliability of the work as a whole. The assertion that information comes from an eye witness is a reinforcement to the appeal to faith mentioned above.¹

Adnès and Canivet understand this as being in Theodoret's mind. "Il est assez facile de savoir si Theodoret a été lui-même le témoin des faits qu'il rapporte, car il a le souci de le signaler, pour donner à ses lecteurs les garanties qu'il réclament, sachant bien leurs difficultés à admettre le merveilleux".² George, the writer of The Life of Theodore of Sykeon, claims that he has "diligently sought them out and learned of them from those who ministered to him during those years, and were eye-witnesses, and also from others who had actually been healed by him".³ In the case of the founder of a monastery, the attribution of material to eye witnesses reassures the reader that the book represents the traditions preserved by the Fathers of the monastery. This seems to be the motive for the reference to eye witness sources for the Life of Pachomius.⁴

Cyril is careful to point out the occasions when he himself was an eye witness of the events he records. The miracles after the saints' death are just a few of the ones he has "seen with his own eyes".⁵ But most of the events of the Life of Sabas and all the Life of Euthymius took place before the birth of Cyril. For

1. See p. 61.

2. A.Adnès and P.Canivet, 'Guérisons miraculeuses et exorcismes dans l'Histoire Philothée de Theodoret de Cyr', RHR 221 (1967) 53-82, 149-179 (p.53)

3. Life of Theodore of Sykeon 170,15-20 (SH 48 p.161)
Theodore had been at the Great Laura of Sabas, spending at least one Lent there without rising from his seat from Christmas to Palm Sunday. Cyril's writings might have been known to him and influenced his biographer.

4. V.Pach.G¹, 10. (Athanassakis p. 14.12-15).

5. 82.12-13

information he has asked the "oldest of the fathers of the desert".¹ He mentions many of his witnesses by name. The most important was John the Hesychast who "passed on to me most of the edifying tales about Euthymius and Sabas".²

John had entered the Great Laura in 491 - fortyone years before the death of Sabas. To his first hand information about the events of Sabas' life, he was able to add the stories about Euthymius which Sabas had told him. The long visits to the desert during Lent and at other times had given an opportunity for John - and another monk Thellalaius - to hear about the exploits of Euthymius from Sabas.³ This information seems to have been sometimes insufficiently complete as one section attributed to John and Thallelailus describing Euthymius' impeccable orthodoxy has had to borrow extensively from Theodoret and Justinians' Confessio Fidei.⁴ John's testimony here was presumably to the fact of Euthymius' orthodoxy - while the content of his beliefs had to be re-constructed.

Cyril's other main source was Cyriac, who had known Euthymius although he had not entered Euthymius' monastery until 475, two years after the saint's death.⁵ Cyril visited Cyriac on several occasions. He tells us of two of these visits, and how Cyriac was ready to tell him about Euthymius and Sabas.⁶ Festugière describes Cyriac's information as "presque directe". Entering the monastery so soon after Euthymius' death, he found that: "Le souvenir était alors tout vivant, et nous voyons que, jusque dans son extrême vieillesse, Kyriakos a reçu de ce souvenir ... comme il s'était longtemps entretenu avec les successeurs d'Euthyme et qu'il avait appris ainsi toute sa manière de vivre, Kyriakos put-il transmettre exactement à Cyrille la tradition la plus fraîche sur le fondateur".⁷

Among the large number of monks whom Cyril spoke to in the course of his investigations some others, as well as John and Cyriac

1. 82.31-83.1.

2. 105.19-20.

3. 56.19-21.

4. 39.18-41.3.

5. 225.22-25.

6. 229.8-10; 232.3-10; 231.22-25; 232.14-15; 29.7-30.6.

7. MQ 3/1, pp.10-11.

are singled out for special mention.¹ Terebon, who had the same name as his grandfather who had been healed of an indwelling devil by Euthymius, was able to pass on information about the Saracens and the Camp of the Tents.² Gregorius was Sabas' nephew and is the source for some of the stories about Sabas' youth.³ An Armenian called Paul, a disciple of Jeremiah, passed on to Cyril "many marvels and most of the things mentioned in this book".⁴ Anastasia, the wife of Pompey the Emperor Anastasius' nephew, had been in Constantinople at the time of Sabas' first visit and had then become a nun on the Mount of Olives.⁵ She was a valuable source of information about the diplomatic dimension of Sabas' ministry. George, Cyril's old superior at Scythopolis, had told Cyril about the impact Sabas had on the townsfolk there.⁶

These monks provided oral accounts of the saints' lives. In addition to these we can assume that the deeds of the founders of the monasteries were remembered and passed down from generation to generation of monks. The anniversaries of the saints' death were occasions when the life was recalled. The Life of Theodosius of Theodore of Petra was delivered as a panegyric on Theodosius' feast day.⁷ Delehaye has claimed in a study of Stylite saints, that their lives were composed for public reading: "Il ne faut pas oublier que ces vies étaient composées avant tout pour la lecture publique soit à l'office soit au moins durant le repas des moines ou à la collation, et le jour de la fête du saint ou en lisait au moins due partie".⁸ Sabas used to celebrate the memorial of Euthymius on 20th January before setting off into the desert and this would have been an occasion for remembering the exploits of the saint.⁹

1. 18.12-13.

2. 18.12-21. 19.

3. 90.1-2. Festugière (MO 3/1.p13) wrongly identifies this Gregorius with the companion of John Scholarius, the superior of the Monastery of the Tower mentioned at 245.17. John's companion came from Pontus.

4. 105.15-16.

5. 145.8; 147.7.

6. 164.25-27.

7. H.Usener, Der heilige Theodosios, p.ix.

8. P.Delehaye, Les Saints Stylites, SHG.14 (Brussels 1923), p.94.

9. 106.13.

Indication that the memory of the saint's Life and exploits were remembered in the monastery is provided by a fragment of another Life of Euthymius. This is preserved in a sermon on the Dormition of the Blessed Virgin Mary by John of Damascus.¹ A remark in the Life of John the Hesychast that there is an obligation on others to describe his "combats, persecutions and perils ... after his death" refers to the practice of re-telling the story of the saint's Life on the anniversary of his death.² This custom would ensure that the traditions were remembered.

1. John of Damascus, Homilia II in Dormitionem BV Mariae (PG96.748A). The interpolation is introduced by the words ἐν τῇ εὐθυμιακῇ ἱστορίᾳ τρίτῳ λόγῳ κεφαλαίῳ τεσσαρακοστῷ οὕτως αὐτολεξέϊ γέγραπται.
2. 221.25.

3 : 4. Documentary sources.

It is part of Cyril's purpose to show that Euthymius and Sabas contributed not just to the growth of monasticism in Palestine but also to the welfare of the whole Church. Euthymius, once he had completed his journey from Melitene to Jerusalem and then settled in the Laura of Pharan, seems never to have left the Judaeian desert.¹ Yet his life and ministry is understood by Cyril within the context of the whole Christian Church.² Sabas was more actively involved in the history of the Empire, travelling to Constantinople and showing concern for the extension of Justinian's territories and the overthrowing of the principle heresies.³ Cyril does not limit his account to the domestic church life of Palestine but places the events he is describing in a wider context. He reports on the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon.⁴ He gives a summary of the political situation within which Sabas undertook his mission to Constantinople.⁵ The intervention of the Emperor is important for the description of the deposition of Elias and the early years of Peter's occupation of the See of Jerusalem.⁶

In these sections of his writing, Cyril seems to have access to official documents, held, we can suppose, in archives either at the Great Laura or at Jerusalem. Festugière refers to the existence of monastery archives at the monastery adjoining St. Simeon Stylites' column and at the Pachomian monastery of Tabennisi and it is likely that similar archives were kept at the Monastery of Euthymius and the Great Laura.⁷

Of the documents included by Cyril, the longest is the letter of Sabas, Theodosius and the monks of the desert to the Emperor Anastasius.⁸ Other official letters are quoted at various points in the text.⁹

1. 14.3-11.

2. 9.7-9.

3. 175.19-176.20.

4. 32.6-33.28; 41.4-45.4.

5. 139.29-141.23.

6. 148.10-158.11.

7. Festugière, Antioche païenne et chrétienne (Paris 1959) pp.353-357.

8. 152.21-157.23.

9. 112.1-11; 141.8-11; 143.25-28; 193.1-6.

He also gives a full and detailed account of the orders of Justinian, given in response to Sabas' requests, which provided for a remission of taxes and the rebuilding of churches destroyed by the Samaritans.¹ These are presented with a precision which suggests access to official documents. These could have been kept in Jerusalem. Schwartz suggests that they "sind so speziall und detailliert angegeben, dass Kyrill eine Abschrift der Kaiserlichen Constitution vor sich gehabt haben muss; es wird fur ihn nicht schwer gewesen sein, sie vom Patriarchat zu erhalten".²

Flusin argues convincingly that Cyril's account of Theodosius' rebellion after Chalcedon and of conflicts between the monks and the Emperor Anastasius derive from a Palestinian historical source.³ "Nous pensons donc que Cyrille a utilisé massivement ce genre de documents, dont il a pu trouver les doubles à la Grande Laure ... L'oeuvre de Cyrille ... suppose, dans les monastères de Palestine, toute une élaboration de documents. L'oeuvre hagiographique ... prend le relai de cette activité pour fixer sous une form durable l'essentiel de ces documents et l'image de lui-même que le monasticisme Palestinien a voulu connaître et conserver."⁴ Cyril's knowledge of events in the history of the Church outside Palestine shows that he must have had access to a set of documentary records kept somewhere in the vicinity of Jerusalem.

1. 176.21-178.13.

2. Kyrillos, p.345.

3. 41.22-42.10; 140.10-14; 141.16-152.15.

4. MH, pp.66-67. His argument is based on a comparison of these sections of Cyril with the equivalent passages in the Ecclesiastical History of Theodore Lector, the Apophthegmata Patrum Gelasius 4, the Chronographia of Theophanes and the Ecclesiastical History of Nicephorus Callistus, all of which, he argues, depend on a common source which he identifies with official documents composed by Palestinian monks. The letter of Alcison in Evagrius' Ecclesiastical History 2.5. (ed. Bidez. p.52) is an example of this style of document.

3 : 5. Chronological sources.

The element of Cyril's writing which has attracted the most attention and praise in modern study is his dating. He has taken care throughout his writings to give precise chronological information to locate the events he is describing in time. This unusual feature is deliberate. To the words he quotes from the Prologue to the Miracles of Thecla promising to commemorate 'places, facts and names', he adds that he intended to remember 'times', which he puts first on the list.¹ Dates are given in a variety of forms: according to indiction year, the year of the Emperor's reign, the consulate, the year of the ascetic's life, the 'world year' and the lapse of time since the incarnation.²

In recent years, researchers have tried to work out a consistent and full chronological framework for the events Cyril describes and relate this to historical information from other sources.³ This has meant that the use to which Cyril's writings have been put has been largely historical. The problem which has confronted writers has been that Cyril is not always consistent. The most notorious error concerns the date of the death of Sabas. Cyril gives nine pieces of information to date the death of Sabas of which three indicate a date in December 531 and six a date in December 532. The confusion is magnified because, although 532 is the correct date, events which took place after 532 are dated with reference to Sabas' death, but refer to the 531 date. All indiction dates after 531 have to be adjusted by one year to produce the correct date.⁴

1. 86.22-24, compare VThecl 9.21 (SMG 62, p.284)
2. For an examination of these separate elements, see Kyriillos, pp.340-355.
3. For example, T.Hermann, 'Zur Chronologie des Kyrill von Scythopolis', ZKG 45 (1926) 318-339; and F.Dölger 'E.Schwartz; Kyriillos von Scythopolis' ByZ 40 (1940) 474-484.
4. This solution to the problem was proposed by Fr.Diekamp, Die Origenistischen Streitigkeiten, pp.11-15. E.Schwartz (Kyriillos, pp.341-346) argues that, while 532 was the date of Sabas' death, the indiction dates referring to events after 531 were given correctly. E.Stein ('Cyrille de Scythopolis, à propos de la nouvelle édition de ses oeuvres' An Boll 62 (1944) 169-186, pp.171-80) reaffirmed Diekamp's solution, and subsequent critics have agreed, see MO p.113 and MH pp.11-12.

There is a more pressing question to be answered: Why does Cyril include dates at all? Schwartz comments: "Umständliche und genaue Datierungen der traditionellen Form der Asketenvita fremd sind".¹ He gives a list of saints' lives in which chronological information is either absent or sporadic. These include John Moschus' Spiritual Meadow, Gerontius' Life of Melania, the Lives of Symeon and Daniel the Stylites and the Life of Antony. The Life of Martin, from the western end of the Empire, shows a similar lack of interest in chronology.² Palladius sets the Lausiac History within an autobiographical framework, and gives the date he arrived in Alexandria ('the second consulship of Theodosius the Great') and tells us when the work was composed ('the 33rd year of my life as a monk, 20th year of my bishopric and 56th year of my life').³ But the lack of information about the dates of the events in the lives of the monks or monasteries of Egypt make it impossible to be confident of the chronology of the work as a whole.⁴

Modern scholarship has obscured our understanding of Cyril's chronology by seeking to harmonise his references and to produce a coherent and consistent framework. This has resulted in trying to reduce all Cyril's dates to one pattern. In fact, Cyril uses three different categories of dates, all of which have different origins. This distinction enables us to understand Cyril's motives in giving chronological information.

The fullest chronological information is reserved for two events only - the deaths of Euthymius and Sabas. The death of Euthymius took place on "the twentieth of the month of January of the 11th indiction, from the creation of the world, when time started to be measured by the revolution of the sun, 5965 years, from the Incarnation of God the Word from the Virgin and his birth in the flesh 465 years".⁵ Cyril gives his sources for this long-term

1. Kyrillos, p.341.

2. J.Fontaine (Sulpice Sévère, Vie de St. Martin, SC. vol.1 p.209) refers to 'la négligence volontaire de sulpice en matière de chronologie'.

3. Palladius, H Laus Prologue; 1.1. (Butler, 9.13-14; 15.6.)

4. For an examination of Palladius' dates, see D.F. Buck, 'The structure of the Lausiac History' Byz 46 (1976) 292-307.

5. 59.23-60.5. Compare 183.5-10.

time scheme as the Chronographies of Hippolytus the Old, Epiphanius of Cyprus and Heron the ascetic and confessor.¹

The Christian chronographical tradition developed in the second and third centuries with the work of Clement of Alexandria, Julius Africanus and Hippolytus of Rome, and then, later, the development and correction of their work by Eusebius of Caesarea. The intention of these chronographers was to show that Christianity was not a novelty but had its roots in the distant past and was the fulfilment of that past. Momigliano wrote of the chronologies: "Christian chronology was also a philosophy of history ... it showed concern with the pattern of history rather than the detail".² In using these dates derived from the Chronographies, Cyril claims a significance for Euthymius and Sabas in the providential ordering of all history. The Prologue to the Life of Euthymius which places the ascetics in the Christian tradition descending from Christ through the Apostles and Martyrs has the same purpose.³ These two dates constitute a statement of the importance of Euthymius and Sabas as well as providing historical information.

The second form in which Cyril dates events is by the year of the life of the saint. An example of this is the date in which Paul, the father of Euthymius, died. It took place when "he (Euthymius) had entered into his third year."⁴ Other examples of dates given in this way are to be found at 14.6; 15.10; 32.6; 41.5; 49.23; 52.1; 93.21; 95.7; 99.10; 103.13; 124.1; 139.20. These dates do not on their own contribute to our historical knowledge. It is only when, as in the case of Cyril, they can be co-ordinated with other events and dates that they enable the life of the saint to be fitted into a broader historical framework. Since we know,

1. 60.6-7; 183.11-13.

2. A. Momigliano 'Pagan and Christian Historiography in the Fourth Century AD' in Momigliano (ed), Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century (Oxford 1963) pp.79-99 (pp.83,85). See also R.M.Grant, Eusebius as Church Historian (Oxford 1980) p. 3; A.Mosshammer, The Chronicle of Eusebius and Greek Chronographic Tradition (Lewisburg/London 1979) p.85.

3. 6.22-8.7.

4. 10.6. The years include the current year. So the modern equivalent of this would be "When Euthymius was two years old". See Kyrillos, p.350.

for example, that Euthymius died in January 473 at the age of 97, other events in his life can be assigned a date.¹ Cyril derived this system of counting from the practice in the desert of remembering the stages of the ascetic's career by his age at certain key moments. Cyriac was able to tell Cyril that he had been 'canonarch and ceimiliarch' for 31 years during which time he had not eaten during the hours of daylight.² Cyril concludes his accounts of the Lives with a summary of the important moments of the ascetic's career and his age at each of them.³ Many parallel examples can be found in ascetic literature of the intervals of time in the monk's career being noted.⁴

The third and most unusual category of dates are the occasions when Cyril refers to the date, the month and the year in which an event took place. He says, for example, that Eudocia died on 'October 20th in the 14th indiction.'⁵ The works contain a total of 27 events dated in this way. On some occasions, Cyril gives the date of the Emperor's reign or the Patriarch's tenure of office in addition to the indiction year.⁶

The majority of events dated in this way are deaths of bishops, monks or other significant persons. This category accounts for fourteen of the indiction dates.⁷ A further seven indiction dates refer to the founding of a monastery or consecration of a church.⁸ The remaining few examples date

1. 59.23; 60.13.

2. 227.2-3.

3. 60.8-14; 183.14-184; 222.3-12; 234.31-235.12.

4. Schwartz (*Kyrrillos*, pp.350-351) gives a list of references to Palladius, Jerome and Gerontius.

5. 54.10. The indictions were counted in cycles of fifteen years, so another 'first indiction' follows after the 'fifteenth indiction'. A system of calculating tax payment, the indiction system goes back to 312-3, but was not in general use until the time of Justinian. See 'Chronologie' in *RAC* Vol.3.30-60; *Kyrrillos*, pp.341-2.

6. For the year of the reigns, 71.12; 140.1. For the year of the Patriarch's office, 52.1; 98.14; 103.10.

7. 54.10; 54.13; 70.22; 93.13; 103.10; 112.15; 116.1; 161.5; 170.1; 171.27; 195.7; 196.18; 225.22; 239.27.

8. 26.21; 104.25; 110.1; 117.17; 195.20. 150.10 and 195.20 refer to the consecration of a Patriarch and installation of a Superior.

either important events in the history of the Church or significant moments in Cyril's personal life.¹

The use which Cyril makes of the indiction dates suggests his source. The dates of deaths and of consecrations or foundations are commemorated in many contemporary inscriptions. It is the epigraphical evidence which provides the closest parallel to Cyril's use of the indiction.

An inscription was found in Jericho dating from 566. "The grave of Cyriac the most blessed priest and superior who founded the (εὐαγελιστὴς ἐκτετακτοῦ) of the holy and glorious martyr George ... He died in the month of December (11th) in the 15th indiction in the second year of our Emperor Flavius Justinian".² There are many equivalent memorial inscriptions including twenty-nine found at Sobota in Arabia, almost all of which include the month, the indiction year and the age at death, and the inscriptions from the monastery cemetery at Choziba of which five record the indiction year.³ A dedicatory inscription was found at Khorsia on the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee. "Under the god-loving Stephen priest and superior took place the building of the baptistery in the month of December in Fourth indiction under our most pious and Christ-loving Emperor Maurice in the first consulate".⁴

The monasteries in which Cyril lived and the buildings of Jerusalem would have contained similar inscriptions. It is probable that Cyril used these inscriptions as the source of many of his dates. Even if we do not assume that Cyril copied directly from inscriptions, the epigraphical evidence testifies to the practice of commemorating significant events, especially deaths and building, using the same method of dating that occurs in Cyril's writings.

1. 173.10 and 179.12 dates Sabas' departure to and return from Constantinople. 192.12 dates the publication of the edict against Origen. 220.2 and 216.9 refer to events in Cyril's life.
2. SEG 8:315.
3. SEG 31:1981. 1425-54; A.M. Schneider 'Das Kloster des Theotokos zu Choziba im Wadi-el-Kelt.' RQ 39(1931)197-232.
4. SEG 26: 1976-7. 1677; See also SEG 30: 1697.

The background of Cyril's practice of providing dates of the events he describes is the Christian chronographical tradition, the custom in the monasteries of remembering the progression of the monk's ascetical life and the long-established interest of the Palestinian people in dates and times.¹

1. Palestine was the home of several historians, including Eusebius of Caesarea, Sozomen and Socrates Scholasticus.

3 : 6. Autobiographical sources.

A final source which Cyril used was his own experience. This has influenced limited sections of his writing. Similarities between the accounts of his own childhood and that of Euthymius have already been mentioned.¹ It seems that, in the absence of information about Euthymius' upbringing, Cyril devised a suitably edifying childhood, drawing on his own experience. The slow nurturing in monastic ways following an early sign of vocation and the absence of a sudden moment of conversion was how his own life developed. The saint's Lives which he describes followed a similar pattern.² The only deviation from this stereotype is the description of the young Cyriac being seized by a desire to live in the desert after a gospel reading in church pierced his heart(*κατενύγη ἡ καρδία αὐτοῦ φόβῳ θεοῦ*)³

It is common to find an author transferring his own experiences to his subject. Jerome tells us, for example, that Hilarion was committed "to the charge of a grammarian at Alexandria, where, so far as his age allowed, he gave remarkable proofs of ability and character; and in a short time endeared himself to all and became an accomplished speaker." ⁴ Just as Jerome's saints were brilliant scholars, Cyril's were precociously pious youths.

1. See above pp.37-38.

2. 10.5-13.8; 86.27-88.17; 223.1-12.

3. 224.1-2. Compare VAnton 2,3 (PG 26:84C)

4. Life of Hilarion 2, W.A.Oldfather, Studies in the Text - Tradition of St.Jerome's Vitae Patrum.(Urbana 1943,) p.313. Is the description of the saint "endeared himself to all" wishful thinking on Jerome's part?

3 : 7. Place in literary traditions.

Previous studies of Cyril's sources have adopted a restricted approach. Festugière pointed out the contribution of the information passed to Cyril orally by his fellow monks and Flusin examined Cyril's dependence on a limited number of written sources.¹ This approach has obscured the extent of the experiences, the friendships and the reading which provided Cyril with the raw material of his Lives. He deliberately and carefully drew information from a large number of different sources and used it to produce an original and individual set of writings.

The originality and distinctiveness of Cyril's Lives led one commentator to provide this assessment. "Damit gab er der Asketenvita eine neue Form".²

If Cyril was an original writer, his originality lay in his careful use of written and of oral sources, rather than in his individual creativity. He was no innovator, but stood within a literary tradition, the tradition of Christian historical writing.

The founding father of Christian history was Eusebius of Caesarea. In the introduction to the Church History, he claims to be undertaking something new. "I am the first to venture on such a project and to set out on what is indeed a lonely and untrodden path ... It is, I think, most necessary that I should devote myself to this project, for, so far as I am aware, no previous church historian has been interested in records of this kind".³ Later historians saw themselves as inheritors of this tradition with the responsibility of continuing Eusebius' work. Theodore Lector saw his task as bringing a unity and completeness to what was essentially the single task of providing the history of the Church.

1. MO 3/1, pp.9-16; MH, pp.41-86.

2. Kyrillos, p.355.

3. Eusebius; HE. 1.1. (SC Vol.1 p.4)

He wanted "to put together those who have set forth the Ecclesiastical Histories and to synthesise them into a single orderly account".¹ There was one historical enterprise in which different writers participated. This continuity is described by R.A. Markus. "Ecclesiastical historians saw themselves almost as members of a kind of diachronic syndicate responsible for the instalments which would add up to make a single cumulative 'ecclesiastical history'".²

Cyril's place in this dynamic, continuous, developing tradition of historical writing is shown by his choice of subject matter. The historians made it clear what topics were suited to historical treatment.

Eusebius lists the topics he intends to deal with. They are the inevitable preoccupations of a minority church which was persecuted and always at odds with the prevailing classical culture.³ They include the establishing of the lines of succession from the apostles to the bishops of the illustrious sees and the teachers of the church; and the relationship of the church with the groups which threatened its existence - heretics, Jews and pagans.⁴ The history of the overcoming of the heretics comes next in his list of subjects. He undertakes to record the names and dates of those who "through a passion for innovation have wandered as far as possible from the truth, proclaiming themselves the founts of knowledge falsely so-called while mercilessly, like savage wolves, making havoc of Christ's flock".⁵ Historians saw themselves as playing a part in God's purpose of bringing peace to the church. Socrates ended his history in the year 439 and hoped that the divisions in the church brought about by the heresies of Nestorius were ended. "In such a flourishing condition were the affairs of the church at this time. But we shall here close our

1. Theodore Lector, HE 1.1. (GCS, p.1)
2. R.A. Markus 'Church History and Early Church Historians' in The Materials, sources and methods of ecclesiastical history, ed. D. Baker. SCH 11. p.8.
3. For discussion of the sociology of the church's self-understanding, see H. Remus, Pagan Christian Conflict over Miracle in the Second Century (Cambridge, Mass. 1983) pp. 73-93.
4. Eusebius HE 1.1. (SC Vol. 1. p. 3:5) and the comment of Markus in 'Church History' (pp. 5-6).
5. Eusebius. HE 1.1. (SC. Vol. 1 3.7-9)

history, praying that the churches' everywhere, with the cities and the nations, may live in peace; for as long as peace continues, those who desire to write histories will find no materials for their purpose."¹ Here the overcoming of heresy is so central a theme of church history that the triumph of orthodoxy renders further historical work unnecessary.

Cyril too wrote to describe the conflicts in the church caused by heresy and the eventual resolution of those conflicts. The Lives of Euthymius and Sabas both conclude, not with the death of the saint but with the end of the doctrinal dispute and the defeat of the heretics.²

The conversion of Constantine changed the nature of the Church and, as a result, introduced new elements into the subject matter of Church history. The church moved from opposition to dominance and so assumed a central part in the life of the Empire. The idea of a Christian Empire led to the conviction that the affairs of the church and the affairs of the state were inextricably linked.

Socrates Scholasticus included in his Church History accounts of events in secular history. He tried to justify this unusual development by appealing not only to his concern lest his readers should become bored with ecclesiastical controversy but also to the connection between the affairs of the church and the affairs of the state. When the life of the state is disordered then "as if by a kind of sympathy the affairs of the church are disordered too". Both these disorders are a result of human behaviour. "I am persuaded that it (disturbance) proceeds from our iniquities; and that these evils are inflicted upon us as merited chastisement".³ It was seen as the Emperors' responsibility to maintain order in the Church as well as the state, and the churches' responsibility

1. Socrates, HE 7.48. (PG.67:841A)

2. 66.18-67.20; 198.7-200.16. The nature and cause of these conflicts are discussed below, pp. 230-266.

3. Socrates, HE 5. intro.(PG.67; 565A)

to maintain the good order of the State through intercession. The authors of the Historia Monachorum extend this idea and state that the whole world depends for its continued existence on the prayers of the ascetics. "Through them the world is kept in being and ... human life is preserved and honoured by God."¹

This change took place in Eusebius' lifetime and is responsible for the difference in style and content between his Ecclesiastical History completed by 323, and the Life of Constantine, which appeared in the autumn of 337. "Eusebius was literally forced to 'rethink history' simply because in his scheme of things history had changed with the coming to power of Constantine. The establishment of Christianity as an approved religion and the rule of a Christian Emperor implied a reconsideration of all past history and a developed theory which could provide an explanation in terms of the linear progression of God's promise and its fulfillment".²

Cyril accepts this connection. Euthymius and Sabas have a role within the history of the Empire. At Euthymius' birth, a forty-year period of tribulation for the church caused by the domination of first the Arians and then the revived paganism of Julian, came to an end and peace descended on the church.³ In the account of Sabas' visit to the court of the Emperor Justinian, the fulfilment of Sabas' petitions for the welfare of the church in Palestine, the restoration of the territories of Justinian's empire to the previous extent and the destruction of the major heresies which trouble the church are all linked together. The spiritual activity of the Saint and the political initiatives of the Emperor combine to bestow this combination of blessings on the world.⁴

A development in the church after Constantine was the growth in the importance of monasticism. Sozomen appears to think that

1. HMon Prologue 9. (SH.53 p.8.)

2. Averil Cameron, 'Eusebius of Caesarea and the Rethinking of History' in Tria Corda: Scritti in onore di Arnaldo Monigliano. (Como 1983) pp.71-88 (p.87)

3. 9.10-10.5.

4. 175.3-176.2; 178.9-18. For further discussion of the relationship between Church and State, see G.Downey 'The Perspective of the early ChurchHistorians'. GRBS 6 (1965) 57-70.

his accounts of the monks is a novelty which requires comment in his statement of purpose in the introduction. "Nor is it foreign to ecclesiastical history to introduce in this work an account of those who were the fathers and originators of what is denominated monachism."¹ Sozomen and historians after him devoted much attention to the monks. The monks, in these histories, took the place of the martyrs in Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History, as witnesses to the truth of the Gospel.²

The growing importance of the monks is also shown in the popularity of the genre of saint's lives. Athanasius in his Life of Antony introduced the notion of the saint as 'the only perfect type of man' and so hagiography "outclassed all other types of biography because all the other types of men became inferior to the saint. In comparison, the ordinary biography of kings and politicians became insignificant."³ Some of the themes which occur in the Saints Lives had occurred earlier in Eusebius' Life of Constantine. In this Life, Eusebius says that he does not intend to discuss the military exploits of Constantine nor his secular legislation but instead will "concentrate on those circumstances which have reference to his religious character."⁴ In support of his contention that Constantine's life is a part of God's plan, Eusebius tells of signs and miracles which show this to be the case. "He was claiming a status for Constantine which could only be demonstrated by a narrative filled with 'proofs'."⁵

In the Life of Constantine, Eusebius shares with the writers of Saints' Lives the conviction that history is guided by God, and that behind the actions of the Emperor, monk or whoever is

1. Sozomen, HE 1.1. (GCS. p.4-10). Markus ('Church History', pp.10-15) uses this passage to show that Sozomen considered monasticism to be 'possibly foreign' to his subject matter, but Sozomen's point is precisely that it is not foreign. He also states that Theodoret avoided discussing monasticism in his Ecclesiastical History, leaving the subject for a separate work, the Religious History. But Theodoret's HE contains several chapters about monks. HE 4. 26-29 (GCS pp.264-270). Markus provides too narrow a definition of church history.
2. See E.E. Malone 'The monk and the Martyr'. StA 38(1956)201-228.
3. A. Momigliano, 'Pagan and Christian Historiography in the Fourth Century AD' p.98.
4. Eusebius, VC 1. 10-11. (GCS pp.11-13).
5. Averil Cameron, 'Eusebius of Caesarea', p.85.

being described lies the plan and purpose of God. Within this understanding, the power of God, expressed in miraculous signs, becomes a normal part of historical evidence. The place of miracle in historical writing is discussed by Flusin who concludes with these words. "Histoire et miracle se trouvent ainsi étroitement liés dans un ensemble d'une parfaite cohérence ... L'histoire ... a pour origine et pour objet le miracle, qui est dans cette perspective le véritable événement historique. Le miracle est en effet pour l'histoire sainte ce qu'est l'événement pour l'histoire profane: le fait ponctuel, que l'on peut aisément situer et qui donc de repère et de preuve acceptable pour tous, où apparaissent à nu les vraies forces qui guident le cours de choses".¹ Flusin is discussing the brand of miraculous history written by Cyril which emerged from the monasteries of the desert. This style of historical writing is a natural outcome of the Eusebian understanding of the nature of history after Constantine. If history is perceived to be guided by God, then wherever God's guidance is discerned, there is history. The actions of the monks, with their claim to be chosen and appointed by God, cannot be pushed to the periphery of history but have a rightful place at the centre of the accounts of the Church Historians.

The development, in the historical tradition has been discussed by Evelyn Patlagean. She has described the change as one of 'space'.² She argues that classical historiography "était bornée par la perception exclusive des faits qui pouvaient trouver place précisément dans l'espace traditionnel de la cité, en conformité avec le système de valeurs et le classement social assortis à cet espace ... ces limites urbaines et civiques de l'espace éclatent dès le 4^e siècle et surtout à partir du 5^e, l'épanouissement de la littérature hagiographique se fait hors les murs matériellement et mentalement ... Le dépérissement de la cité, et la christianisation de la société et de l'Empire sont les deux facteurs d'une évolution."³ The stage of history has moved from the city to the country: the actors have become holy men rather than bishops and generals.

1. MH, p.214.

2. E. Patlagean 'Ancienne hagiographie byzantine et histoire sociale' Annales ESC 1 (1968) 106-126; and Pauvreté économique et pauvreté sociale à Byzance, 4^e-7^e siècles (Paris 1977) p.19.

3. Patlagean, Pauvreté, p.19.

A popular element is introduced into historical writing. Patlagean attributes this change to the rise of the form of literature which she calls hagiography, and which has transformed the rigid and settled categories of historiography. But a sharp contrast between historiography and hagiography is here inappropriate. The same forces which produced the hagiographical literature also led to the transformation of the historical tradition. Although she distinguishes hagiography from historiography, Patlagean perceives them to be complementary and not divergent sources for social history. "Ainsi apparaît moins une séparation définie entre les oeuvres d'histoire et d'hagiographie que la possibilité d'un classement commun, aux deux extrémités duquel se trouveraient, limites presque théoriques, l'oeuvre de pure hagiographie et l'oeuvre de pure histoire".¹

These changes produced a new style of literature in the sixth century concerned not only with the welfare and history of the Empire but also with events in the lives of lowlier members of society; classical in the sense of being 'the highly wrought products of the educated minority' yet 'popular' in the concern to appeal to all members of society; and with an acceptance of the miraculous as a normal part of everyday experience.² This literature included the Chronographia of John Malalas; the Topography of Cosmas Indicopleustes and the oddly assorted works of Procopius. Averil Cameron describes this style of writing in her comments on Procopius. Procopius has an "acceptance of the miraculous and supernatural as an adequate replacement for historical analysis, an acceptance which he shared with other writers of late antiquity both ecclesiastical and secular. Thus the supposedly 'rational' Procopius in fact differs little from the authors of 'hagiography' and 'popular'".

1. Patlagean, 'Ancienne hagiographie', p.119.

2. A phrase of Averil Cameron, Procopius and the Sixth Century (London 1985) p.24.

literature. That this should be so stems from a change in society, whereby a far greater place was allowed to religion and its representatives such as holy men. History and chronicle differ therefore not in the 'level' but in their form and choice of focus."¹

The developments in the literary traditions of the period are a sign of far-reaching changes in the society. The writings of Cyril are both a witness to these changes and a result of them.

1. Cameron, Procopius, p.31.

Chapter Four

NATURE OF THE PALESTINIAN MONASTERIES.

4 : 1. Geography.

Cyril describes Euthymius' longing to inhabit the desert. "The glory-hating and God-loving Euthymius, considering that this care (of taking responsibility for the monasteries of Melitene) stood in the way of virtue, left the city and took flight to Jerusalem, desiring to live in this desert".¹ Cyril's subjects are all motivated by the same desire.² The journey that each of these monks made took them first to Jerusalem, where they venerated the Holy Places and stayed for a while in a monastery or charitable institution in the city. Their stay was brief and, before long, they set off to the desert to the east of the city. John the Hesychast's exodus was the most dramatic. A voice commanded him to follow a heavenly light which appeared to him as a cross and led him directly to the Great Laura.³

The desert environment which awaited them was a real place. In its physical properties, it differed from the deserts of both Egypt and Syria. In Egypt the contrast between cultivated, inhabited land and the empty desert is dramatic and clearly defined. The average annual rainfall is a little over an inch (or 20 mm) and the Egyptian peasant depended almost exclusively on the life-giving waters of the Nile for water both for drinking and for the cultivation of crops. However strong his desire for solitude, the monk could not stray far from the river, and even there, arid desert imposed on monastic life the character of a struggle for survival. "To survive at all in the hostile environment of such a desert, the Egyptian had to transplant into it the tenacious and all-absorbing routines of the villages of the οἰκουμένη. To live at all, a man had to remain in one place, earning his living from manual labour, from pottery and reed-weaving. Groups had to reproduce exactly, on the

1. 13.27 - 14.2.

2. Compare 90.8-9; 204.3-4; 224.16; 236.10-11; 242.6; 244.32 - 245.1.

3. 204.17-21.

fringe of the desert, the closed-in, embattled aspects of the fortified villages of Upper Egypt."¹

Syrian monasticism, in contrast, was a phenomenon of the mountains. Wilderness and civilisation, ἔρημος and οἰκουμένη intermingled. The monk's withdrawal into the desert consisted of a retiring into the unproductive mountainous regions. A sometimes erratic but usually plentiful supply of rain ensured that the hermit could support himself from the pools of water which collected and the plants which grew naturally. The monastic life was informal and unsettled. If conditions became hard, the monk could always rejoin the ranks of landless labourers seeking work in the villages.²

The desert to the east of Jerusalem enabled a style of monastic life which was different from those of Egypt and Syria to develop. Monasteries were numerous and often grew up in close proximity to each other. The figure of 130 desert monasteries at the time of Sabas has been suggested.³ Sometimes separate communities shared the same location, as was the case on the hill of Castellion which was occupied both by a Sabaitic coenobium and a laura of hermits.⁴ Cyril's statistical information is meagre, but other sources show that the Judaeian monasteries could grow to a large size. A monastery near the Dead Sea contained about 800 monks according to a report dating from 440, and Romanus' monastery near Thekoa was a centre for 600 monks.³

1. PRL Brown. 'The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity', JRS 61 (1971) 80-101 (p.83).
2. For a description of the characteristics of Syrian monasticism, see A.Vööbus, A History of Asceticism in the Syrian Orient, Vol.2. (Louvain 1960) pp.292-315. The terrain of one area of Syria is described by G.Tchalenko, Villages antiques de la Syrie du Nord, 3 vols. (Paris 1953-8) Vol.1. pp.61-68. He points out that the rainfall in this 'desert' is 500 mm. per annum.
3. J.Murphy O'Connor, The Holy Land (Oxford 1980) p.253. Y.Hirschfeld, 'The Judaeian Desert Monasteries in the Byzantine Period, their Development and Organisation in the light of archeological research' (dissertation Hebrew University of Jerusalem 1987) pp.13-19, suggests the lower figure of sixty.
4. John Moschus, Prat 167, (PG.87.3: 3033C); JT Milik 'The Monastery of Kastellion' RB.42 (1961) 21-27. See also the story of the monk Jacob, 129.3-7.
5. V.Hypatii 140.1-2, (MO.2 p.82); John Rufus Plerophoria 25. (FO. p.58). Romanus' monastery was the site of the New Laura. Y.Hirschfeld ('Judaeian Desert Monasteries' pp.214-7) suggests a total figure of 2,800 monks in the Judaeian desert. The figures from Life of Hypatius and Plerophoria, even if exaggerated, suggest that figure is too low.

The existence of a monastic society of this size required a plentiful supply of food and water; and the opportunities to earn enough to ensure the provision of necessities. In order to survive, the monastic communities had to adapt to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the terrain. The nature of the environment dictated the nature of monastic life.

The map attached is intended to describe the environment in which the monks lived. Previous maps have shown the location of the major monasteries but the small scale and absence of physical features on these maps have limited their usefulness.¹ This map takes as its basis that produced by the British Ordnance Survey team in 1946. This has the advantage over more recent Israeli maps, that the place names given are the traditional Arabic names transliterated into English. Many of these names have descended from Byzantine times and provide indications as to the location of the monasteries. For example, there is a hill about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles north east of Bethlehem which is called Khirbet Luqa, clearly the site of the monastery of Luke, the disciple of Euthymius.²

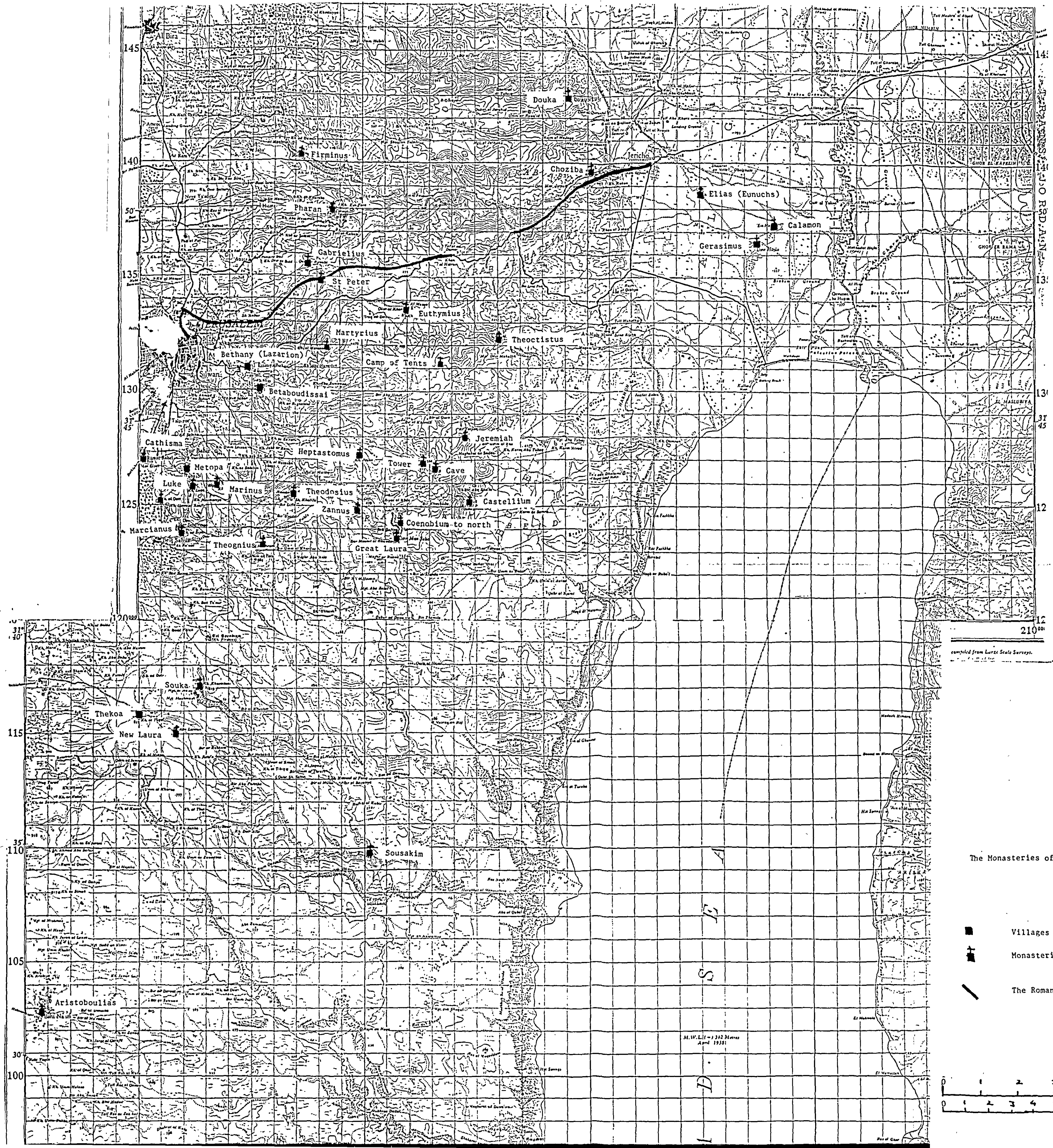
Two sources of evidence have been used to determine the position of the monasteries and villages of the time of Euthymius and Sabas. Firstly there is literary evidence as to the names and approximate locations of the monasteries provided by Cyril, John Moschus and others. In addition Cyril provides accurate topographical detail about the places which he describes. The value of these indications is acknowledged by a modern archeologist. "Topographical details can again and again be confirmed on the spot. It was, for instance, from what he (Cyril) tells us that we were led to find the cemetery of St. Euthymius, and the line of the walls of the church of his laura in the vault under the church of the coenobium; to place the New Laura, with the remains of two churches, on the hill south-east of

1. R. de Riess, Atlas Scripturae Sacrae, 2nd edn. (Freiburg-im-Breisgau, 1906); MO 3/2, p.136.
2. 16.12-14; 114.4-5.

Tekoa; and to go down deep into the wilderness to find St.Cyriac's secret place of Sousakim".¹ The most comprehensive collection of literary evidence is the check list of S.Vailhé.²

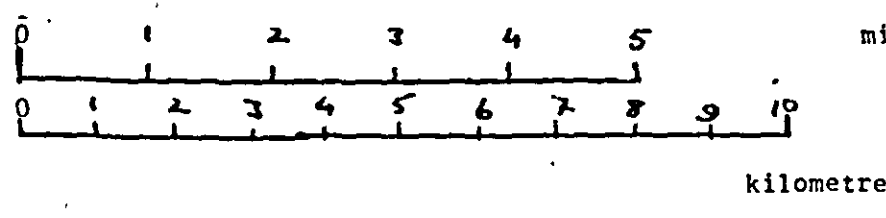
The second source is the evidence provided by archeological research. There has been extensive surveying and excavation in the monastic sites of the Judaeen desert during the last century. A convenient summary of this work is provided in the catalogue compiled by A.Ovadiah.³ Since Ovadiah published his study in 1970, further archeological research into the monastic buildings and churches has been undertaken under the direction of Y.Hirschfeld. Dr. Hirschfeld's findings have been published in part and a fuller work is in preparation.⁴ He is continuing his excavation and our information about the monastic sites of the desert can be expected to be considerably expanded during the next few years. The identification of the location of some of the monasteries is the result of Hirschfeld's unpublished findings.

1. D.J. Chitty, The Desert a City (Oxford 1966) p.131.
2. S.Vailhé, 'Répertoire alphabétique des monastères de la Palestine', ROC 1^{er} series 4(1899) 512-542 and 5(1900) 19-48, 272-292.
3. A.Ovadiah, A Corpus of the Byzantine Churches in Holy Land, Theophaneia 22 (Bonn 1970).
4. Y.Hirschfeld, Archeological Survey of Israel Map of Herodium(108/2) 17-11. (Jerusalem 1985); and 'The Judaeen Desert Monasteries in the Byzantine Period, their Development and Internal Organization in the light of Archeological Research' (Dissertation, Jerusalem 1987).



The Monasteries of the Palestinian Desert

- Villages
- Monasteries
- The Roman Road from Jerusalem to Jericho



The accompanying notes have a limited purpose. They present references to the places in Cyril's writings which provide topographical information, references to the works of Vailhé and Ovadiah, which in turn refer respectively to primary literary sources and to archeological reports. They also provide justification for the selection of a specific location when this is disputed, and refer to the main bibliographical sources.

Notes to Map.

The route of the Jerusalem-Jericho road has been established by R.Beauvéry drawing on the earlier researches of P.Thomsen (R.Beauvéry: 'La route romaine de Jerusalem a Jericho', RB 64 (1957) 72-101; P.Thomsen. 'Die römischen meilensteine der Provinzen Syria, Arabia und Palestina', ZDPV.40(1917)₁₋₁₀₃).

The monasteries:

- Calamon. 138.20; 216.22-24. 217.9.
Vailhé 16 (The number refers to that in Vailhé's alphabetical list). The exact location is unknown.
- Camp of Tents. 24.14-20.
A description of the site by R.P.Féderlin is in R.Génier. La Vie de St.Euthyme le Grand (Paris 1909) pp.94-104.
- Castellium. 110.1-10; 208.1-3.
Vailhé 19. Ovadiah 109.
A description in GEH Wright, 'The Archeological Remains of el-Mird' in the Wilderness of Judaea' RB 42(1961) 1-21.
- Cathisma. Vailhé 20. Ovadiah 152.
- Cave. 126.9-20
Vailhé 123.
Festugière suggests that the cistern Bir el'Armara is that referred to in 167.4-16 (MO. 3/2 p.139).
- Coenobium to the north of Great Laura. 113.6; 221.8-10.
- Choziba. 134.19.
Vailhé 24. Ovadiah 37.
A monastery remains on the site.
- Douka. Vailhé 31.
For a description, see S.Vailhé: 'Les premières monasteres de la Palestine'. Bess 3 (1897-8) 39-58. (pp.44-8). The monastery was at the summit of the mountain, but has since been re-established so that today it is to be found on the slope.

- Elias (Eunuchs) 51.17-18; 171.19-20.
Vailhé 32. 39.
- Euthymius. 23.21-24.4; 64.21-65.8.
Vailhé 41. Ovadiah 97.
See D.J. Chitty 'Two monasteries in the wilderness of Judaea', PEFQSt. (1928) 134-152 and 'The monastery of Euthymius' PEFQSt(1932) 188-203.
- Firminus. 99.24.
Vailhé 43. Ovadiah 48.
See M.Marcoff and D.J. Chitty; 'Notes on monastic research in the Judaeen wilderness 1928-9.'
PEFQSt (1929) 167-178.
- Gabriel. 56.8-12.
Ovadiah 176.
The nature of the ruins at Wadi el Rawabe conform with Cyril's account of the location of Gabriel's Lenten retreat. See V.Corbo, 'Il romitorio egumeno Gabriele' Terra Santa July-August (1951) 202-7.
- Gerasimus. 224. 24-25.
Vailhé 50.
The location is unknown but the monastery was close to that of Calamon. See O.Meinardus, 'Notes on the Laurae and Monasteries of the Wilderness of Judaea'.
SBFLA 16 (1965-6) 328-356.
- Great Laura. 98.7-10 and throughout the Life of Sabas.
Vailhé 106.
- Heptastomus. 98.19-20; 129.5-7; 130.16-25.
Vailhé 54.
S.Vailhé suggests that the cistern of Heptastomus, which served the Great Laura, was in fact that built by Eudocia within sight of Euthymius' monastery. In defence of this suggestion, he cites the Metaphrastic edition of the Life of Sabas which says that the cistern was 50 stades, rather than 15, from the Great Laura. He locates both at Khirbet al Murasas, which is called by arabs Abouseba-abouab or 'father of seven months'. This location places the cistern too far from the Great Laura for the episode of the rebellious monk Jacob to be credible (129.5-7). The Laura of Heptastomus is more likely to be in the neighbourhood of Khirbet Jinjas. This is the view of R.Génier, Vie de Euthyme, p.37-8.
- Jeremiah. 179.16-17.
Vailhé 64.
- Luke. 16.12-14; 144.4-5.
Corbo Gli Scavi di Kh.Siyar el Ghanam (Campo dei Pastori) e i monasteri dei dintorni (Jerusalem 1955) p.148, for the remains at Kh.Luqa.

- Marcianus. 49.12; 66.25; 111.25.
 Vailhé 71. Ovadiah 126.A-B.
 The monasteries in the area of Bethlehem were excavated by V.Corbo. Gli Scavi.
 He suggested that Khirbet Glohdham is the site of Marcianus' monastery but this location is too far distant from Bethlehem to harmonise with Cyril's references. Gli Scavi pp.162-3. The larger monastery of Khirbet Siyar-el-Ghanam is a more likely site for the substantial establishment of monks. This is also the view of S.Vailhé: 'Les premières monasteres de Palestine', Bess 4 (1898-9) 193-211 at pp.197-8.
- Marinus. 16.12-14; 114.3-4.
 Ovadiah 98.
 Corbo identifies Marinus' monastery with remains at Khirbet Abu Ghunneir, Gli Scavi, p.144.
- Martyrius. 51.19-21; 69.26-27.
 Vailhé 77. Ovadiah 111.
 The current name Kirbet Murasus preserves the ancient name of the monastery. Vailhé suggested that the remains at Deir es Sidd are those of Martyrius' monastery, since this site is well within view of the Jerusalem-Jericho road, and Cyril tells us that the road passed by the monastery. But subsequent investigations have shown that a branch of the road followed a route which leads by Khirbet Murasas. The remains at Deir-es-Sidd are too modest to be identified with the substantial monastery of Martyrius. See S.Vailhé 'Les premières monasteres de la Palestine', Bess 3(1897-8) 334-356 (pp.339-340).
- New Laura 67.17; 123.5; 228.25-28.
 Vailhé 87. Ovadiah 93.
 The New Laura should be located at the Kasr el-Abd.
 See M.Marcoff and D.J.Chitty, 'Notes on Monastic Research in the Judaeian Wilderness 1928-9', PEFQSt(1929) 167-178.
- Peter. 57.7-13.
 Vailhé 97. Ovadiah 111.
- Pharan. 14.9-10; 79.24-25.
 Vailhé 94.
- Souka. 121.1-3.
 Vailhé 21.
- Sousakim 232.5-6.
 See Marcoff, Chitty. "Notes on monastic research".
- Theoctistus 15.10-25; 20.13-15.
 Vailhé 129. Ovadiah 34.
- Theodosius 114.7; 190.13; 237.24.
 Vailhé 131. Ovadiah 32.

- Theognius. 242.17.
Vailhé 132.
Corbo locates the monastery at Khirbet Makhrum
(Corbo, Gli Scavi, p.154-5.)
- Tower. 48.6-11; 127.15-17.
Vailhé 63.
Khirbet el-Muntar rises to 515 m. the highest peak
in the area.
- Zannus. 132.30-133.6.
Vailhé 137

The journey from Jerusalem to the shores of the Dead Sea is dramatic. Over a distance of 15 miles the road drops from 800 feet above sea-level in Jerusalem to 400 feet below sea level at the shores of the Dead Sea. As the road descends, so the land-scape changes. The hill country around Jerusalem and Bethelhem is relatively fertile. The soil is of the Mediterranean Terra Rossa type and the average rainfall is about 600 mm. per annum.¹ The combination of rich soil and plentiful rain (even though rainfall is normally confined to the months between November and February) ensures that there is abundant vegetation, including olive groves and other trees.

About two miles east of Jerusalem the soil changes to the type which is described by M. Zohary as a type of calcareous steppe soil producing an Irano-Turanian type of desert. This rocky, dry and hilly countryside produces shrubs but no trees. The rainfall is lower than in the hills around Jerusalem and the average precipitation is between 250 and 400 mm. per annum. Today this area has a substantial population as a result of new Israeli settlements being built among the small villages of Arab herdsmen and the tents of Bedouin tribes. A large and ugly settlement surrounds the site of Euthymius' monastery at Khan el-Ahmar, a beautiful hilltop described enthusiastically by Cyril and by later writers, such as Murphy O'Connor.² The land is suitable for grazing and the Bedouin shepherd with a flock of sheep or goats is a familiar sight.

About seven miles from the Dead Sea, the terrain changes again. The hillsides are rocky and empty, shifting gravel and coarse sand have produced a soil type described as hammada rocky desert. The area is classified as Saharo-sindian and only sparse desert vegetation can be supported. The rainfall is between 100 and 200 mm. per annum.

1. M. Zohary, Vegetation of Israel and surrounding areas. (Wiesbaden 1982) pp.18-22.
2. 64.21-65.8. "Surrounded by graceless factories, the forlorn ruin of Khan el-Ahmar bravely continues to bear witness to a spirit which is the antithesis of the crass political materialism behind the establishment of an industrial zone in one of the most beautiful valleys in the Judaeian Desert". (J.Murphy O'Connor, The Holy Land, p.216.)

Finally, on the shores of the Dead Sea, the land-scape changes yet again. The Dead Sea lies towards the north of the depression in the earth's surface of which the African Great Rift Valley is a part. The plant and animal life is similar to that found in parts of Africa. Rain is almost non-existent - well below 100 mm. per annum.

The geographical composition of this stretch of land, with the sharp drop in height, the compressing of four distinctly different types of soil into a small area and the enormous difference in the pattern of rainfall, has combined to produce an environment offering possibilities of a varied form of monastic life.¹

Life in the desert areas depends on the availability of water. Today the only perennial stream in the Judaeian desert is the Wadi el Qilt, in which the monastery of Choziba is built. Other wadis provide a seasonal supply of water, for example the Wadi Qidron, in which is the Great Laura, and the Wadi Mukallik, where Euthymius and Theoctistus first settled and where Theoctistus established his coenobium.² In addition to the supply of water from streams in the wadis, the monasteries depended on the availability of spring water or the collection of rainwater in cisterns.³ The map shows that the monasteries were built either in the western areas of the desert where rain was relatively plentiful or clinging to the sides of ravines with a stream running in the valley below.

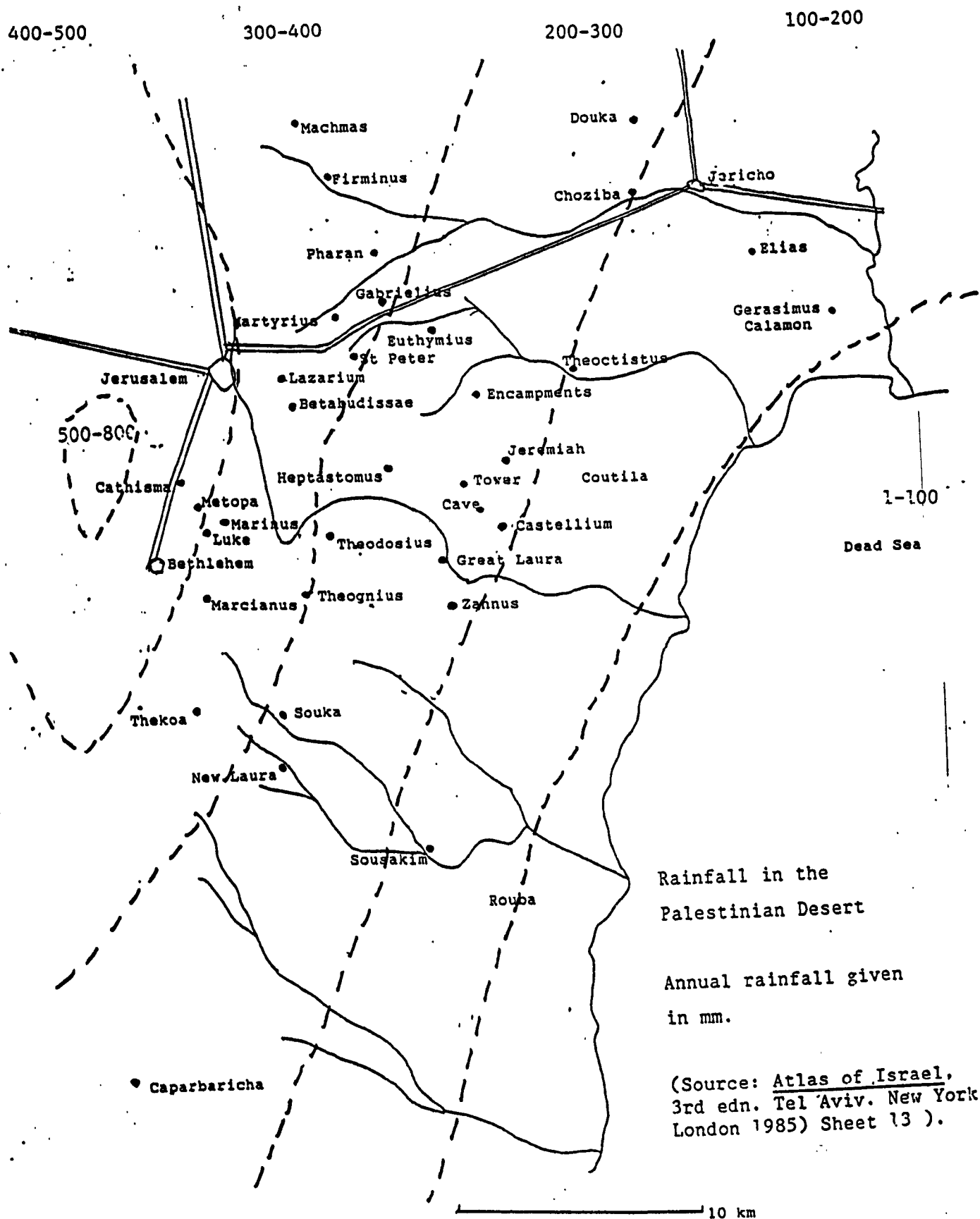
The growth of the monasteries described by Cyril took place in a period which was wetter than normal. The years between 250 and 330 were dry, and during this period there was a decline in agricultural production throughout the provinces of Palestine. Then the average rainfall increased and remained at a high level until about 500.⁴ Thereafter the level of rainfall declined.

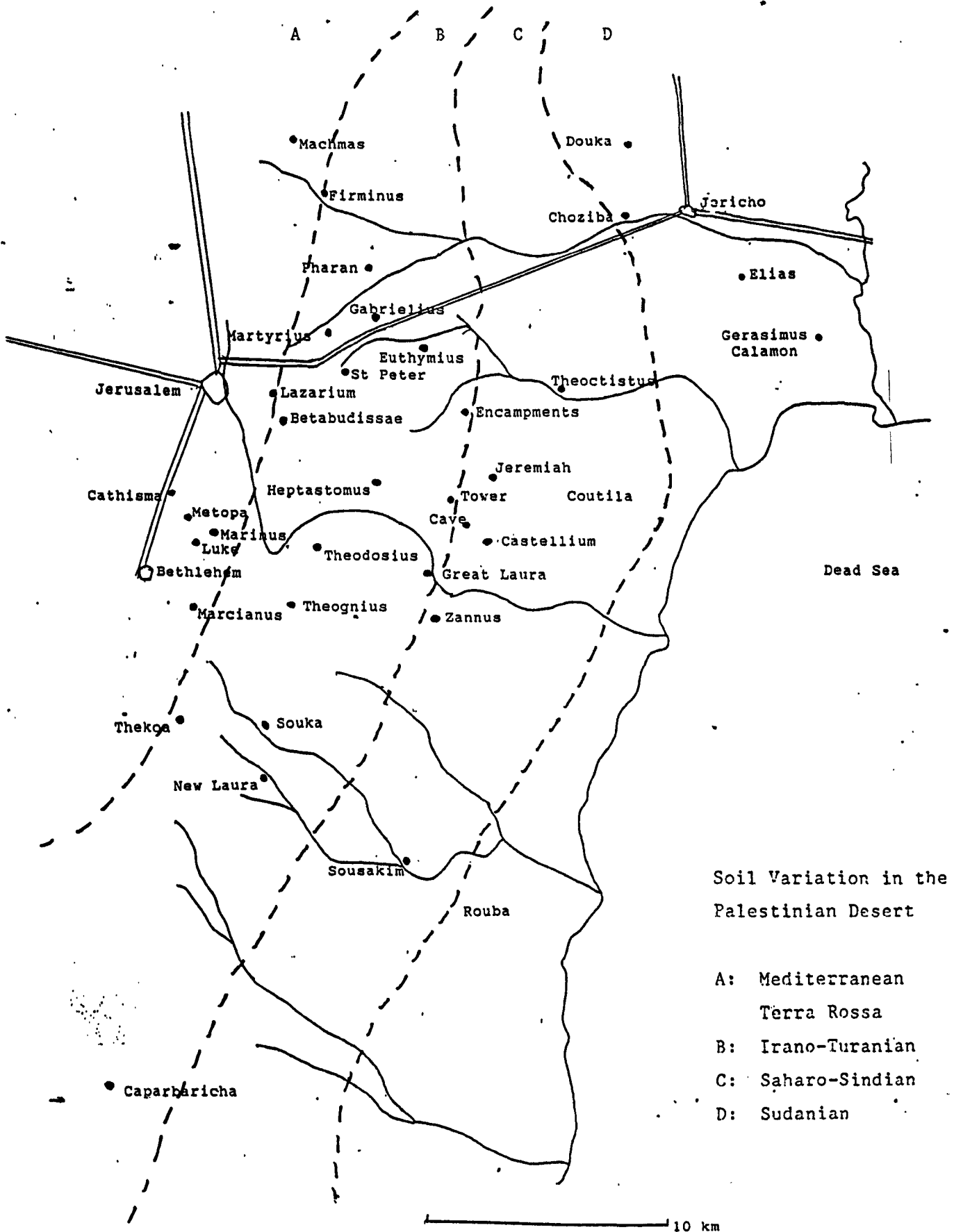
1. Maps 3 and 4 show the changes in rainfall and soil type.

2. 15.10-22.

3. 65.14-66.10; 101.6-19; 117.15.

4. See D. Sperber, *Roman Palestine 200-400. The Land.* (Ramat-Gan 1978) pp.70-72; CEP Brooks, *Climate through the Ages* 2nd edn. (London 1949) pp.305-315.





A sign of this drier weather after 500 is the five year famine and drought which, Cyril tells us, was ended as a result of the prayers of Sabas.¹

The impact of even a small variation in rainfall could be considerable. "A slight increase in the average winter's rainfall and a greater proportion of good years to bad years would have its greatest effect in marginal lands, and make a settled habit of life possible where now it appears impossible."² Euthymius and Sabas founded their monasteries during a period when rainfall was high. This made survival more possible, even in the drier parts of the desert.

Rain between the months of March and October is unusual, and virtually all rain falls in the winter months of December, January and February. This pattern of rainfall led to the popular custom of the hardened ascetics leaving the laura sometime after the feast of the Epiphany and returning on Palm Sunday. This practice seems to have originated as an ascetic discipline in Asia Minor. In Lent Euthymius retired to a local mountain-top during his youth at Melitene.³ But it was in the Palestinian desert that this way of passing Lent developed from a rare ascetic discipline to a regular part of monastic life. The journey to the 'Utter Desert' (*πενήρημος*) for Lent was a normal procedure for both Euthymius and Sabas.⁴ The departure took place towards the end of January, when the rain was drawing to a close, the streams and natural cisterns were at their fullest and the vegetation at its most abundant. Just as the need for water concentrated monastic settlements into the small areas of the wadis, so the increased availability of water in the months of February and March made an escape to a greater degree of solitude and silence possible.

1. 167.25-169.24.

2. G.F.Kirk, 'The Negev or Southern Desert of Palestine' *PEFQSt* (1941) 56-71 (p.68). These remarks apply equally to the Judaeen desert.

3. 13.20-26.

4. 51.9-11; 56.21-25; 57.17; 106.10-11; 107.8-10; 129.5.

The monks had to eat as well as to drink. The nature of the supply of food varied according to the environment in which the monastery was set. In some areas the monasteries developed into agricultural producers. This happened, for example, in southern Egypt where Pachomius' monasteries expanded as a result of the hard work of the monks and the gifts of benefactors, like Petronius' family who donated "slaves, sheep, goats, camels, donkeys, carts and all he possessed including boats".¹ This led Theodore to observe that "owing to the excuse of needing food and other bodily needs, the monasteries had acquired numerous fields, animals and boats".² In the mountains of Syria "chaque monastère constitue une entreprise agricole autonome, très vaste et très bien organisée".³ Monastic farms have also been excavated in parts of Palestine, including the Beth-Shan valley.⁴ The relatively fertile hillsides around Bethlehem and Jerusalem offered the possibility of cultivation of olives and other crops. There the monasteries were able to develop into substantial farms.

The monastic remains at Khirbet Siyar-el-Ghanam have been excavated by Virgilio Corbo, who discovered extensive buildings, including a network of water cisterns, several olive and wine presses, a bakery and grain silos. The main monastery buildings can be dated to the sixth century.⁵ This large monastery should be identified with that of Marcianus which, according to Cyril, was 'near Bethlehem' and was large enough to provide donkeys and provisions for the building of Castellion and was comfortable enough for Marcianus to feel he was living a life of ease (καθ'ἑν ἐν ἀνέσει).⁶ Theodore of Petra tells how Theodosius visited Marcianus on his way from Jerusalem back to his own monastery and the natural route of this journey would pass through Kh.Siyar el-Ghanam.⁷ The excavation of

1. VPach G' 80 (Athanassakis, 116.10)

2. VPach Ro 197.

3. Tchalenko, *Villages antiques*, Vol.1 p.20.

4. Beth-ha-Shita, Ovadiah, *Corpus* No.32.

5. Corbo, *Gli.Scavi*, pp.19-88 'L'ambiente materiale della vita dei Monaci di Palestina nel periodo Bizantino' *OrChrA* 153 (1958) 235-257. This monastery is built on a possible site of the Shepherds' Fields.

6. 49.12; 66.25; 112.2-9; 237.15-16.

7. Theodore of Petra, *VThds* 73.22.

Corbo (*GliScavi*, p.162-3) suggests that Khirbet Gihdham is the site of this monastery, but the remains are too sparse and the distance from Bethlehem too great for this identification to be convincing.

these remains show the kind of monastic establishment which could develop in the agricultural regions at the western end of the Judean desert. Here, large scale agricultural production was possible.

Cyril's monasteries lay further to the east in the belt of land in which the soil was most suitable for grazing. As a result, shepherds play a prominent part in Cyril's Lives. They provided a communications link between the monastic communities and the villages around Jerusalem and were a source of provisions for the maintenance of the monks. Shepherds from Lazarion, today Bethany, were the first to discover Euthymius' cave in the Wadi Mukellik. They brought food and reported the discovery in Euthymius' old monastery of Pharan.¹ Shepherds were also witnesses of Sabas' victory over the demons on the hill of Castellion.² This presence was not always beneficial. On one occasion monks of the Monastery of the Cave complained to Sabas that they had no peace because shepherds were pasturing their flocks in the area around the monastery (*ἐν τοῖς τοῦ μοναστηρίου τόποις*) continually begging.³ This situation was resolved when the ewes ceased to give milk and the young died. Wisely, the shepherds withdrew.

The supply of edible plants in the area provided food for the monks as well as for sheep and goats. Plant-gathering excursions were a regular feature of life in this part of the desert. Sabas, as a young man in Theoctistus' monastery, was strong and was reputed to have gathered three loads of 'mannouthia' daily instead of the usual one load.⁴ Cyril shared in this task when he lived at Euthymius' monastery.⁵ It is suggested that 'mannouthia' were edible thistles, which can be occasionally seen today in the markets of Jerusalem.⁶

Another plant collected by the monks was 'melagria', a root which was dug up using a small spade or knife. These were plentiful

1. 15.22-16.10.

2. 111.5-10.

3. 160.14-18.

4. 92.7-10.

5. 72.18-19; see also 130.30.

6. See MO 3/1. p.48.

and were relied on by the monks during the Lenten journeys into more remote areas. It is likely that they provided food for John the Baptist who lived, according to Matthew, on *μέλι ἄγριον* - misleadingly translated as 'wild honey'.¹ This plant could have been the wild mushroom which is popular among the Bedouin.²

'Maloas' was also collected, washed and eaten.³ This plant is mentioned in the Bible and is to be identified with the shrubby orache, a large plant which can reach the height of two metres. It grows in salines, on river banks and by the roadside.⁴ The leaves are eaten by both shepherds and their sheep during times of famine.

Coloquints (*κολοκύνθη*) could often be too bitter for human consumption and squills (*σκίλλαι*), which are the fruit of the desert asphodel, were not considered to be edible. A miracle was required in order for them to serve as food.⁵

The eating of wild plants collected in the surrounding countryside appears to have been a distinctive characteristic of monasticism in the Palestinian desert. Evagrius writes of ascetics who he describes as 'grazers' (*βοσκοί*). In his account, these men practice the extreme and unusual form of asceticism of living like animals off plants.⁶ A way of life strange and extreme to Evagrius, who reflects a Syrian outlook, was commonplace to a Palestinian. John Moschus met several 'grazers' and although he can identify them by this title, he does not seem to regard their way of life as unusual or worthy of special comment.⁷ The way of life of the *βοσκοί* was the individual form of the widespread practice of living off the land in a grazing area. While these plants would not be considered as suitable for normal human consumption today, they offered a means of survival in an area in which survival was difficult. They became a staple of the monks' diet.

1. Matthew 3.14.

2. MO, 3/1.p48.

3. 77.14-15.

4. Job 30.14. See M.Zohary, *Plants of the Bible* (Cambridge 1982) p.143.

5. For coloquints, 138.11-18. For squills, 227.9-17 and MO 3/1 p.48.

6. Evagrius HE 1.20 (Bidez. v.30).

7. John Moschus Prat 19, 21, 86, 92, 129, 154, 159, 167. (PG 87.3: 2865B; 2868B; 2944B; 2949B; 2993C; 3021C; 3028A; 3033C).

The monks' dependence on wild plants was a result not only of the harsh terrain but also of the laurite way of life. In the Byzantine period agriculture was practised even in desert areas. Aerial surveys have shown traces of extensive cultivation from this period in the Negev, a desert even less appropriate than the Judaeen desert for farming. A 50,000 acre tract of land between Mamshit and Shivra was once under cultivation. Excavation at six desert towns - Elus, Rehoboth, Nessana, Subeita, Eboda and Mampsis - show that these used to be surrounded by cultivated lands.¹ This was made possible by the careful conservation of such water as was available from rain, dew and streams.

The monasteries used water conservation for the growing of plants. Cyriac grew lettuces at his remote hermitage at Sousakim and the road to the Great Laura was lined with trees.² In addition to this literary evidence, archeological research has shown that most monasteries set aside land to serve as a garden where fruit and vegetables could be grown to vary the diet of the monks.³ This cultivation was always on a small scale. The laurite life, in which cells were dispersed over a wide area, did not allow the organisation necessary for large-scale agriculture.

In addition to plants which could be gathered or grown, food was imported. The most essential of these imports was wheat for bread making. Cyril records that wheat was bought at Machairous and transported by camel to the Great Laura.⁴ Grain silos, ovens and store-houses for bread were an important part of the monastery buildings.⁵

1. See Avi-Yonah, 'The Economics of Byzantine Palestine', IEJ 10 (1960) 39-51 (p.40). For farming techniques see Y.Aharoni et al, 'Ancient Agriculture of the Negev' IEJ 10 (1960) 23-36, 97-111; Y.Kedar, 'Ancient Agriculture at Shivtah in the Negev', IEJ 7 (1957) 178-189. A farm was established at Avdat in 1959 to investigate ancient techniques of desert farming, see Murphy O'Connor, Holyland p.134.
2. 232.13-18; 221.8-17. A small olive grove is still maintained near the gate of the Great Laura (Mar Saba).
3. Hirschfeld, 'Judaeen Desert Monasteries', pp.198-200.
4. 186.15-17.
5. Hirschfeld, 'Judaeen Desert Monasteries', pp.227-231. See also 123.27 and Theodore of Petra, VThds 37.20-22.

4 : 2. Jerusalem and Pilgrimage.

The Judaeian desert provided food and water, and so made monastic life possible. But it was not the capacity of the soil for growing plants which led the monks to make their homes on it. They came because it was near Jerusalem. The sites chosen for the monasteries allow easy access to the City. Euthymius' monastery at Khan-el-Ahmar is situated on a small hill in the plain of Sahel overlooking the main Jerusalem - Jericho highway, about seven miles journey from the City.¹ Cyril seems to be a little embarrassed that Euthymius, the great lover of solitude, should have chosen to settle so near a busy main road. He says that although it is now a 'place of passage' (*δίόδος*), when Euthymius settled there it was impassable (*ἀδιόδευτον*)² But this is scarcely plausible. Euthymius had travelled widely in the desert. He must have chosen the position with its access to Jerusalem in mind. The Great Laura of Sabas is considerably further from the Holy City - about twelve miles. But its position in the Kidron valley ensured that the journey would not be difficult. On foot it could not have taken more than a few hours and it was made sufficiently regularly for the track below the north wall of the city to be known as the 'road to the Great Laura' (*τὴν ὁδὸν τῆς Μεγίστης λαύρας*).³ The other monasteries founded by or dependent on Euthymius and Sabas could all be reached in a comfortable day's journey by a traveller from Jerusalem.⁴

The choice of the site was not accidental. Each of the monks whose lives Cyril describes had two motives - or rather one motive with two elements. Sabas was a monk in Cappadocia. He was "seized by the god-pleasing desire to discover (*καταλαβεῖν*) the Holy City and to lead a life of silence (*ἡσυχάσαι*) in the desert around it."⁵ The same was true of the other subjects of Cyril's writing. Cyril

1. 23.20-24.7. The route of the old Roman Road lies at this point about half-a-mile to the north of the modern road. See Beauvéry, 'La route romaine' (pp.80-84).
2. 24.2-3.
3. 168.8.
4. For distances from Jerusalem, see Map 2.
5. 90.7-8.

describes how Euthymius venerated the Holy Places and then settled at Pharan which was "six miles from the holy city".¹ The short distance between the two is mentioned as a way of emphasising the connection. Elsewhere Cyril uses the phrase ἐπὶ τὴν ἁγίαν πόλιν ἀναχωρεῖν to remind his readers that it is essential to the monastic vocation he is describing to live in close contact with Jerusalem.² It was a part of his own vocation.³

The monks were among those drawn by the magnetism of the Holy City and the monasteries which they founded were products of the phenomenon of pilgrimage - that huge movement of persons into the provinces of Palestine from all parts of the Roman Empire. Both the pilgrims who arrived for a short visit and those who settled contributed to the society and culture of Jerusalem, of which the monasteries formed a part.

Pilgrims undertook the long journey to Jerusalem for many reasons.⁴ But always most important was the longing to see the place where Christ had lived and died. It is expressed clearly in Sabas and Theodosius' letter to the Emperor Anastasius. They say that "the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so to speak, touch the truth each day with their hands through the Holy Places."⁵

These powerful emotions were a relatively new phenomenon. Socrates describes how Helena arrived in Palestine "finding that which was once Jerusalem desolate as a preserve for autumn fruits."⁶ This sad situation did not last long. The True Cross was discovered and a huge building programme initiated.⁷ These buildings made their mark on the popular imagination. The Church of St. Pudenziana at Rome contains a mosaic laid down towards the end of the fourth Century which depicts the heavenly Jerusalem in form of the buildings in the earthly equivalent in the Holy Land.⁸

1. 14.9.

2. 224.2. compare 204.3-4.

3. 71.17-20.

4. For details of this journey, see Sulpicius Severus Dialogues 1.8. (PL.20:189). AHM Jones, Later Roman Empire, vol.2 (Oxford 1964), p.832.

5. 154.15-17.

6. Socrates HE 1.17. (PG 67: 117B)

7. Socrates HE 1.17. (PG 67: 121A)

Sozomen HE 2.1.4-8; 2.26.1-4. (GCS 48.4-49.15; 87.15-88.3).

8. W.F.Oakeshott, The Mosaics of Rome (London 1967) pp.65-67.

The importance of Jerusalem was acknowledged by the highest authorities, as when Justinian proclaimed it to be "set over other cities."¹ His predecessor Justin I put its position to good use in appealing to the pope to re-establish relationships after the Acacian schism. A part of his argument was the need to be in communion with Jerusalem 'the cradle of Christianity'². Some more sceptical voices spoke against this view. Hilari on visited the Holy Places so as not to seem to despise them but warned that people should not believe that God lives in a particular place.³ Gregory of Nyssa, after a visit to Jerusalem, commented "what brings us closer to God is not a movement in space but purity of soul."⁴

Studies such as that of E.D.Hunt and the biography of Jerome by JND.Kelly have concentrated on pilgrims who were wealthy.⁵ These included Jerome's circle of noble Roman ladies, such as Paula and Eustochium, or Egeria from Galicia in North Western Spain who travelled around Egypt and Palestine sometime between 381-4.⁶ These journeys were often carried out in extravagant style. Poemenia, in her visit to Egypt, travelled down the Nile as far as Lycopolis to visit the famous ascetic John, and completed this stage of her journey in a fleet of boats.⁷ The arrival of these entourages created quite a stir and often the bishop would head the reception committee which went out to greet the party of pilgrims. Egeria reports how she was welcomed by the Bishops of Arabia, Edessa and Carrhae.⁸

Political developments in the West contributed to the volume of pilgrim traffic. The uncertainty in the face of threatened barbarian invasion led Melania, for example, to sell her estates in Spain, and this sale, we are told, raised only a small sum of money "snatched from the jaws of the lion".⁹ The number of refugees increased with the Fall of Rome to Alaric in August 410, causing Jerome's

1. Justinian, Novella 40 a 536.

2. Collectio Avellana, Letter 232, CSEL 35. p.703.10-16.

3. See Abel, Histoire de la Palestine Vol.2. (Paris 1952) p.293. Compare Theodoret (HRel 9.2.SC vol.1. p.408) who states that pilgrimage does not imply that God is circumscribed.

4. Gregory of Nyssa Ep.2. (ed.Pasquali p.14.12-13).

5. E.D.Hunt, Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire AD.312-460 (Oxford 1984) and JND Kelly, Jerome (London 1975).

6. Hunt, Holy Land Pilgrimage, pp.136-146.

7. Hunt, Holy Land Pilgrimage, pp.76-77.

8. Itinerarium Aetheriae 8.1; 9.1; 19.5; 20.2. (SC.296 pp.160, 162, 204, 214.)

9. Vita Melaniae 37 (SC.p.196).

complaint about the arrival of people once rich but now reduced to poverty relying on establishments such as his monastery for maintenance.¹ The barbarian invasions may have led to financial difficulties for the pilgrims but they only increased the wealth concentrated in Palestine. The threat of losing property to the barbarians stimulated generosity, encouraging pilgrims to move their resources eastwards. But this group of wealthy Western pilgrims, although well-documented in the sources, was small in number.

Most of the pilgrims who arrived in Jerusalem came from the East. The ports of Palestine lay at the end of the caravan routes from the Far East, and the road system made travel to Syria, Cappadocia and other parts of Asia Minor convenient, if slow.² The good road connections enabled Egeria to include Mesopotamia on her itinerary. She had heard of the holy lives of the monks there. "I wanted to go from Syria to Mesopotamia to visit the Holy Monks, who are said to lead admirable lives."³ Her route took her from Antioch along the Euphrates to Batriae, a busy military and commercial centre. The flow of travellers moved in the direction of Jerusalem too, and Jerome and Aetheria were struck by the number of visitors in Jerusalem from the East.⁴ Guillaumont has distinguished between the settled peasant population of Egypt and the nomadic people of Syria to whom continual movement was a normal way of life, and for them Jerusalem was an obvious destination.⁵

Both literary and epigraphical evidence show the origins of the monks of Judaea. Cyril of Scythopolis gives the nationalities of the first twelve companions of Euthymius. They include three Cappadocians (who had been brought up in Syria), three brothers from Armenia (from Euthymius' native city of Melitene), three from Rhaithecu in the Sinai peninsular, one from Antioch in Syria and one from Scythopolis.⁶

1. Jerome. Com in Ezekiel 3, prologue; 7, prologue (CCL 75 pp.91,277-8). See also Kelly, Jerome pp.305-306.
2. Avi-Yonah, 'Development of the Roman Road System in Palestine' IEJ 1(1950-1) 54-60. (pp.55-6); Hunt, Holy Land Pilgrimage, pp.51-55.
3. Itin Aeth 17.20. (SC p.198).
4. Jerome Ep. 107.23 (CSEL 55 p.292).
Itin.Aeth. 49.1 (SC pp.318-9).
5. A.Guillaumont, Aux origines du monachisme chrétien (Begrolle-en-Mauges 1979) pp.104-8. The extension of this is the way of life of the vagabond monk to whom movement is a vocation. "La vie monastique est conçue comme un pèlerinage jamais achevé". (p.104.
6. 25.17-26.14. A list of the monks' nationalities mentioned by Cyril is given by Schwartz, Kyrrillos, p.359-360.

The fullest evidence for the nationalities of the monks comes from the monastic cemetery at Choziba. This cemetery contains a total of 213 funerary inscriptions dating from the fifth to the tenth centuries, with the majority from the sixth and seventh centuries.¹ Of these inscriptions, 73 give the place of origin of the monk. They show that the largest number come from Northern Syria and Asia Minor (a total of 30 including twelve from Cilicia, nine from Cappadocia, four from Isauria and three from Antioch). The next largest group comes from the area to the south west of Palestine (a total of 17 including thirteen from Ascalon, two from Gaza and one from Maiuma). Smaller numbers come from Greece and Cyprus (nine, including one from Thrace) and from the regions to the north of Palestine (six from southern Syria). Other regions represented on the list are Mesopotamia, Georgia, Armenia, Persia, India, Rome and Arabia (eleven come from these areas). Both of these lists show that few monks in the Palestinian monasteries are natives of Palestine, and few come from the western part of the Empire.² Most come from provinces to the north and east.

The pilgrims and travellers from these northern and eastern areas come from a different social background from noble Roman ladies. In her comments on the above list of nationalities of monks of Choziba, Patlagean says: "On reconnaît à Choziba le recrutement des montagnes peuplées et pauvres, dont les hommes ont été attirés par la Terre Sainte en dépit de la distance."³ She also suggests that, since it is customary in Syrian inscriptions for the town of origin to be mentioned, the absence of this information in the Choziba inscriptions could imply that these men are especially poor.⁴

Visitors from these areas were not always welcomed. The monk Barsaumas, born near Samosata, made visits to Jerusalem accompanied

1. Schneider, 'Das Kloster des Theotokos' (pp.317-329).
2. Cyril refers to a few individual monks from the west, for example, the Roman Aemilianus, 36.13.
3. Patlagean, Pauvreté Economique et Pauvreté Sociale (Paris 1977) p.336.
4. Or, alternatively, that they were nomadic. Patlagean, Pauvreté, p.338.

by parties of monks, between forty and a hundred in number. Accounts of these visits show the fear which these wild men of the mountains evoked in the local inhabitants. We are told that they passed through the land destroying temples and synagogues. At Petra, the gates were closed against the visitors who threatened to burn the town if they were not admitted. Barsaumas entered and prophesied the end of a four year drought and before long his prophecy was fulfilled so dramatically that the force of the rain broke the city walls. On another occasion 15,000 armed Jews confronted Barsaumas but his "iron tunic (worn for ascetic reasons) and hair which fell to the ground terrified them and he pursued them and burned their temples."¹ These accounts, even though they may suffer from exaggeration, testify to the local reactions to some of the wilder groups of pilgrims.

A similar group of wild country people are probably the subject of the story in the Life of Euthymius. A group of four hundred Armenians arrived at the monastery on their way from Jerusalem to the Jordan. Euthymius told Domitian to give them something to eat and, on hearing that there was only enough food for ten people, a miracle happened which caused the storehouse (ἀποθήκην) to be filled.² Schwartz entitles the chapter "Wundliche Speisung einer Karawane", but the stories of Barsaumas form a more plausible context for the story than that of a visiting caravan. In this case the miracle would be the preservation of the monastery as much as one of multiplication of loaves.

It is hardly surprising that Gregory of Nyssa warns monks and nuns of the dangers of going on pilgrimage, and makes the half humorous comment about Jerusalem that "nowhere else in the world are people so ready to kill each other."³

1. F.Nau. 'Deux episodes de l'histoire juive sous Theodose II'. REJ 83-84 (1927) 184-206 (p.188).

2. 27.5-28.7.

3. Gregory of Nyssa, Ep.2.10. (Pasquali, p14.12-14)

Further evidence for the presence of the poor among the pilgrims comes from the establishment of hostels and other provision for those in need. Palladius describes the charity of the Deaconess Magna who established hostels for both 'beggars and travelling bishops.'¹ The large numbers of the poor attracted to Jerusalem caused the Church of the Resurrection to be allowed special permission to sell its possessions in order to minister to the poor by a novel of 536.²

Jerusalem, the Holy City, attracted people from many parts of the Empire and from all social classes. The presence in it of both the very rich and the very poor provided the social and economic conditions in which the monasteries grew and thrived.

Evelyne Patlagean distinguishes "trois types d'activités monastiques". She goes on: "on peut (les) voir se succéder ou se combiner dans le même établissement, mais différent par les besoins de leur équipement initial: la communauté d'artisans la communauté agricole la communauté hospitalier, productrice de services pour les pauvres et les malades."³ The second of these we have already seen to have been inappropriate in the arid lands east of Jerusalem.⁴ The first will be discussed later.⁵ The third was inevitable for monasteries situated so close to a major centre of international pilgrimage.

The provision of services and of care for the poor played an important part in Byzantine society which, as R.Browning has commented, was "organised for the transmission of wealth rather than the creation of wealth."⁶ The traditional mechanisms by which wealth had been used for the common good had been concentrated in the cities. Leading citizens accepted obligations to provide for the welfare of others through the services paid for by the curial classes. There is evidence from the fifth and sixth centuries that eligible citizens were declining to enter the curia and so evading the charges necessary to maintain the services.⁷ New agencies entered this

1. Palladius, *H-Laus* 67 (Butler 163.10-24).

2. Novella, 51.N.40.

3. Patlagean, *Fauvrets*, pp.318-319.

4. See above pp. 119-120.

5. pp. 142-145.

6. R.Browning 'The low-level Saint's Life in the early Byzantine period'; in *The Byzantine Saint*. ed.Hackel (London 1981). pp.117-127 (p.121)

7. See AH Jones: *Later Roman Empire* pp.740-748; G.E.B. de Ste-Croix, *The Class Struggle in the Ancient World* (London 1981) pp.471-472.

vacuum and were encouraged to provide necessary support for the poor. Among these were churches and monasteries who became intermediaries between rich and poor.

Monastic texts praise hospitality and generosity.¹ One of Theodosius' virtues is that of a "prodigious generosity to the poor without distinction of persons".² There was no attempt to stockpile resources as a reserve in case of need, and there are several stories of occasions when the storerooms were empty and the steward feared that he should not be able to satisfy those who came to the monastery for food.³ The monasteries practised a "redistribution permanente et immédiate".⁴

The monasteries received gifts from a wide variety of sources. On his official visits to Constantinople, Sabas was given substantial sums of money from the Emperors Anastasius and, later, Justinian. Although Anastasius sympathised with Monophysite groups, he gave Sabas a total of 2,000 pieces (νομισματα) of gold.⁵ This money Sabas distributed among his monasteries (τοῖς ὑπὸ αὐτὸν μοναστηρίοις).⁶ A similar story, which could refer to the same event since the sums of money involved are similar, is told by Theodore of Petra about Theodosius who received thirty pounds of gold from Anastasius - although here Theodore distrusts the Emperor's motives and sees the money as a bribe.⁷ A similar gift of Justinian was distributed around the desert.⁸ The church authorities also contributed to the work of the monasteries, offering gifts to Sabas through a priest of Anastasis, Marcianus.⁹ An Asian bishop called Aitherius also made generous contributions to the Jerusalem monasteries.¹⁰

It was, above all, the accumulation of gifts from residents and visitors which enabled the monastic communities to function

1. E.g. John Moschus, Prat 16,24. (PG 87.3: 2864 B-C, 2869 B-C).
2. 238.27.
3. 27.5-28.10; Theodore of Petra, VThds 37-8; 73.15-75.6.
4. Patlagean, Pauvreté, p.189.
5. 143.8-9; 146.21.
6. 147.25-27.
7. Theodore of Petra, VThds 55.2-15.
8. 179.13-14.
9. 127.5-7. It can be presumed that a priest in this official position made these contributions on behalf of the church rather than as a private individual.
10. 213.6-7.

effectively. These included systematic and (probably) regular distributions by wealthy citizens, like those described by Theodore of Petra, who "made of their riches a means of saving their soul" and "distributed to all who followed a life of poverty up to a maximum of a third of a piece of gold to each individual."¹ Other offerings were occasional and unexpected. One Easter, John the Hesychast and his disciple had insufficient food and the disciple lost heart and left John. Shortly afterwards a man arrived with a mule load of gifts - bread, wine, oil, cheese and honey. By a happy chance the disciple lost his way and returned and so could enjoy the gifts and find his faith strengthened.² Similar stories are frequent in Palestinian sources.³

These episodes show that the offering of gifts in kind both to monasteries and to isolated ascetics was a common practice among the residents of Palestine and that ascetics depended on these contributions for survival. The villagers of Lazarion seem to have considered it their responsibility to ensure that the needs of Euthymius and Domitian were met.⁴ Visitors passing through would offer gifts and, if the monastery boasted an interesting tourist attraction, such as a tame lion, the volume of income would increase, as the vivid anecdote told by the Piacenza pilgrim shows: "One traveller gave the nuns large amounts of food, in the hope that they would sell him the (tame) lion and ass - thirty cassocks, vegetables, oil, coats, dates, baskets of roast chickpeas - He did not get the animals and we were quite unable to soothe his disappointment and grief. All he could say was - devil take it, what's the use of being a Christian!"⁵ This flow of resources into the monasteries was encouraged by government as their role in society grew in importance.⁶

1. Theodore of Petra, VThds 27.10-15. Unfortunately they neglected, on this occasion, to include Theodosius in this liberality but a timely miracle ensured that his community did not suffer.

2. 210.5-211.14.

3. Eg 160.5. Theodore of Petra, VThds 26.18-22.

4. 16.7-8.

5. Antoninus Placentinus 34 (CCL p.146)

6. For legislative changes, see Patlagean, 'La pauvreté à Byzance au temps de Justinien: Les origines d'un modèle politique' in Études sur l'histoire de la pauvreté, ed Mollart (Paris 1974) pp.59-81 (pp.72-74.)

The monasteries used these goods to minister to the huge numbers of people who passed through the country. In their letter to the Emperor Anastasius, Sabas and Theodosius expressed their concern for the pilgrims who came to worship in Jerusalem. In this case they wrote of their desire that visitors should be edified and consoled and not scandalised at the presence of Jews, Samaritans and others.¹ Their concern extended to a more practical ministry. Theodosius' first step towards founding his monastery was to build a hostel (*ξενοδοχεῖον*) and to receive anybody who came to him.² As his monastery grew, so did his capacity to minister to visitors. At its height, there was a variety of buildings so that everyone who came could receive what he needed.³ There were separate houses for monks from abroad, wealthy visitors, poor visitors, the elderly and the mentally ill.

Excavations in Syria have established that large buildings were often constructed near the monastery church. These usually had two stories and colonnaded sides. It seems unlikely that they were built for monks who would have preferred a greater solitude. It is more likely that they were intended for guests. The buildings consisted of large rooms which afforded protection from the weather. "L'habitation monastique normale comporte des salles fermées et des portiques. Ce plan est commun aux monastères et hôtelleries: c'est celui qui permet de faire dormir le plus grand nombre d'hommes à l'abri de la pluie, du vent et du soleil ... dans l'espace le plus réduit."⁴ Buildings such as these would have gained monasteries a reputation for hospitality. Choziba, for example, was known as : *πτωχῶν καὶ ξενῶν ἀναπαυστήριον*.⁵

1. 154.9-10.

2. 238.16-17.

3. Theodore of Petra, *VThds* 34.15-16.

4. J.Lassus, *Sanctuaires chrétiens de Syrie* (Paris 1947) pp.266-276, quotation from p.276. Tchalenko (*Villages antiques de la Syrie au Nord*, vol.1 (Paris 1954) pp.19-20, 163-7) suggests that these buildings housed meeting rooms and workshops. See also A.J.Festugière, *Antioche païenne et chrétienne* (Paris 1959) pp.319-328.

5. O.Meinardus, 'Notes on the laurae and monasteries' (p.233).

The Great Laura of Sabas was among the monasteries which were not situated on main thoroughfares. When money became available to him, he bought premises in both Jericho and Jerusalem, as houses where visitors could be welcomed and ministered to.¹ The Jerusalem guesthouses of the Great Laura and Castellion were near the tower of David, which has been described as "un centre de tout de quartier monastique avec des cellules, couvents et hôtelleries des grand monastères du désert de Jérusalem."²

Particular attention was given to the care of the sick. Theodosius' monastery, as has been noted, had a special house for the sick, and it can be assumed that Sabas' monastery provided similar facilities as monks are described as receiving medical attention.³

In addition to providing care in his own premises, Sabas asked the Emperor Justinian to provide a hospital in Jerusalem. The Emperor agreed, providing a revenue of 1850 νομισμάτα to pay for a hospital of a hundred beds which was later extended by a further hundred beds.⁴ This hospital is mentioned by Procopius and should be identified with the 'royal hospital' attached to the Nea Church to which Strategius refers.⁵ Two miles south of Jerusalem was another γηροκομείον, the 'patriarchal hospital, attached to the Monastery of St. George. This hospital had four hundred beds, and, like Theodosius' monastery, received

1. 109.13-17; 116.8-25.

2. J.T.Milik, 'La topographie de Jerusalem vers la fin de l'époque byzantine', *MUSJ* 37 (1960-1) 127-189 (p.187)

3. 131.26 ('the doctor of the laura'). A description of medical care in a monastery is preserved in the *Life of Theodore of Sykeon* "If any required medical treatment for certain illnesses or surgery of a purging draught or hot springs, this God-inspired man would prescribe the best thing for each, for even in technical matters he had become an experienced doctor. He might recommend one to have recourse to surgeon and he would always state clearly which doctor they ought to employ." 145.29-45 (Festugière p.114). See also H.J. Magoulias. 'The Lives of the Saints as sources of Data for the history of Byzantine medicine in the sixth and seventh centuries' *Byz* 57 (1964) 127-150.

4. 177.9-14.

5. Procopius. *Buildings* 5.6.25. (LCL p.348) Milik 'Topographie' (p.152).

all kinds of pilgrims, including John the Hesychast on his arrival in Jerusalem.¹

Pilgrimage had developed into a major commercial activity offering employment, income and relief to many.² It was a form of commerce which provided the monasteries in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem with a source of revenue and a ministry to fulfil.

1. 204.7-9,16. See Milik 'Topographie' (pp.142-144). These hospitals had the capacity to minister to many different groups of people,
2. Peter the Iberian earned a living by caring for pilgrims in Jerusalem; see R.Raabe, Petrus der Iberer 47 (Leipzig 1895) pp.47-48. Deir Siman, in Syria, shows the possibilities of the pilgrimage industry. It was a large village with bazaars, inns and convents. "Il représente une forme particuliere a d'activité commerciale" (Tchalenko, Villages antiques, vol.1, p.392.)

4 : 3. Building Work.

The society in which the monasteries existed was prosperous. This prosperity was related to the influx of pilgrims into the country. They brought with them huge amounts of money which stimulated the economy. Eudocia alone is calculated to have spent 20,480 lbs. of gold while she was in Jerusalem. This is equivalent to 1,500,000 gold pieces, at a time when two gold pieces could keep a person for a year. This figure, given by the fourteenth century historian Nicephorus Callistus, is doubtless exaggerated, but its huge size witnesses to the massive scale of Eudocia's spending.¹

The money was spent on, among other things, building. To build was a sign of 'greatness of soul', and it added glory to the reputation of the benefactor. Procopius' motive in providing a catalogue of Justinian's building achievements was to add to his reputation.²

The natural instinct of great men and women to finance public building was stimulated further in Palestine. Eudocia made her second visit to Jerusalem in 441 or 442, and never returned to Constantinople. The reasons for this journey are obscure. Sexual infidelities with Paulinus, the magister officium, were hinted at but strenuously denied by Eudocia.³ Intrigues and the shifting power balance at court had been involved, and her years at Jerusalem had the character of an exile. Although she had been responsible for the building of churches while in Constantinople, among them the church of St. Polyeuctos, her building programmes accelerated dramatically upon her arrival in Jerusalem.⁴ Cyril describes her contribution to the architecture of the Holy Land. "The blessed Eudocia built a huge number of churches for Christ,

1. Nicephorus Callistus, HE 14.50 (PG.146:124D). Evagrius, HE 1.22. (Bidez 29.18-25). See Avi-Yonah 'Economics of Byzantine Palestine', IEJ 8(1953) 39-51 (p.41-44) and Hunt, Holy Land Pilgrimage, p.239.
2. See Averil Cameron, Procopius and the sixth century. (London 1985) p.89; G.Downey 'Imperial Building Records in Malalas' Byz 38 (1938) 1-15, 299-311.
3. Hunt, Holy Land Pilgrimage, p.236.
4. Hunt, Holy Land Pilgrimage, p.237.

of monasteries, hospices (πρωχέρια) and hospitals, which is not in my power to number".¹ The motive for this burst of building activity lies, in part, in her political fortunes. The exclusion from court did not extinguish her desire for greatness. Her activities derived from a desire that Jerusalem should rival Constantinople in the grandeur of its monuments.

A further motive for building was the concern for the frontier. Palestine was a vulnerable part of the Empire. Its prosperity was preserved by a vigilant watch over the border areas. In the fourth century, Ammianus Marcellinus described Palestine: "Ultima Syriarum est Palaestina per intervalla magna potentia, cultis abundans terris et nitidis a civitates haben quasdam egregias, nullam nulli ce dentem sed sibi vicissim velut ad perpendicularum aemulus".² Fortified synagogues have been excavated at Beth-Yarah in the Jordan valley and at Ma'on in the northern Negev. These were occupied from the fourth century and show that Jews were encouraged to settle in frontier areas and to provide fortified buildings.³ Churches were also constructed in frontier areas, adding a divine protection to that provided by the military. "A church, as often as not dedicated to the Virgin Mary, was essential for the defence of the Empire against the barbarians, for sacraments and relics represented a power greater than human armies."⁴

There were three main periods of building in the Holy Land in the Byzantine era. The first was at the time of Constantine, when the three large basilicas of the Anastasis, Eleona, and Nativity at Bethlehem were built.⁵ These structures impressed contemporaries, and Sozomen passes briskly over new building at Antioch compared with that at Jerusalem.⁶ Avi-Yonah's verdict is that this spate of activity brought in valuable goods but did not benefit the economy of the country.⁷ The second period, up to the death of Eudocia

1. 53.5-7.

2. Ammianus Marcellinus 14.8.11-13 (LCL Vol.1 pp.70-71).

3. P.Bar-Adon 'A possible fortified synagogue at Beth-Yonah' and S.Levy 'The Ancient synagogue at Ma'on', both in Roman Frontier Studies 1967, Proceedings of the 7th International Congress held at Tel Aviv (Tel Aviv 1971).

4. Gregory Armstrong 'Fifth and Sixth Century Church Building in the Holy Land' GOTR 14(1969) 17-30 (p.23).

5. Sozomen HE 2,2.1; 2.24.1 (GCS 50.10-15; 87.15-88.3). Socrates HE 1.17. (PG 67: 120B-121A)

6. Sozomen HE 3.5.1 (GCS. 105.15-19).

7. Avi-Yonah 'Economics' (pp.41-4).

in 460, was characterised by private initiatives rather than imperial programmes.¹ By far the most productive period was the third - the extensive building programme under Justinian. Armstrong states: "The age of Justinian was the greatest single period of building activity in Palestine."² More precise evidence is provided by A.Ovadiah. His analysis of archeological discoveries includes the dates of the buildings. The distribution of excavated churches in the Byzantine period is as follows:

Century:	4th	4-5th	5th	5-6th	6th	7th	8th	Undated
No. of Churches	9	3	45	14	56	15	3	52

The figures confirm the peaks pointed to by Avi-Yonah, and confirm the verdict that the sixth century was a period of prosperity. "The building expansion in the sixth century is a facet of the flourishing economic position and the relatively stable political situation of the Byzantine Empire under the long rule of Justinian I, who gave both spiritual and financial support to the construction of churches in Palestine."³ The churches were lavishly ornamented and decorated. The magnificent mosaics, such as those at Beth-Alpha and the Monastery of the Lady Mary at Beth-Shan date from this period.⁴ Avi-Yonah contrasts Palestine, with its mosaic pavements of the fifth and sixth centuries, with Africa and Gaul, where the majority of these pavements were produced earlier - in the second and third centuries. He finds in this phenomenon an indication that Palestine was at its most prosperous during these later centuries.⁵ This time of prosperity was based on public investment, and led to an increase in population which in turn stimulated demand for agricultural and other goods. Inevitably it was short-lived. Once the building stopped and resources ceased to enter the country economic decline set in.⁶

1. Avi-Yonah 'Economics' (pp.41-44.).
2. Armstrong 'Church Building' (p.27). See also J.W.Crowfoot Early Churches in Palestine (London 194) pp.139-148.
3. A.Ovadiah, Corpus of the Byzantine Churches in the Holy Land (Bonn 1970) p.193.
4. See G.Fitzgerald, A Sixth-Century Monastery in Beth-Shan (Scythopolis) (Philadelphia 1939) pp.5-10.
5. M.Avi-Yonah, 'Mosaic Pavements in Palestine' QDAP 2. p.79.
6. The population of the country in the Byzantine period is estimated to be four times that of the Israelite period. See Avi-Yonah 'Economics' (pp.39-40). For agricultural expansion, see D.Sperber, Roman Palestine 200-400. The Land. (Ramat-Gan 1978) pp.64-68.

The monasteries were involved in the work of building in different ways. Firstly, they benefitted from it. Alongside Ovadiah's list of churches should be set a list of monastic foundations drawn from literary sources. This division of monasteries according to their date of foundation was made by Patlagean on the basis of Vailhé's list, from which she removed those monasteries which could not be dated sufficiently accurately. Her list is as follows:¹

Centuries	4th	1st half	5th middle	2nd half	1st half	6th middle	2nd half	7th	After 7th
No. of foundations.	6	4	9	11	14	2	0	0	1

The bulk of monasteries were founded from the mid-fifth century (approximately the peak of Euthymius' career) to the early sixth century (the period of Sabas' foundations). The peak of church building came a little later, as churches were often built in monasteries which already existed, as at Ruhama where the church was the ancient refectory, or at Sede Nahum where the sixth century church was built over another structure with mosaic floor which was presumably an earlier monastic church.²

As well as monasteries directly benefitting from money spent on building, monks were involved in building other churches. Cyril describes how Sabas went to Constantinople on behalf of the Palestinian church to ask for funds for church restoration throughout Palestine to make good the damage done during the Samaritan revolts. The Emperor Justinian seems to expect that Sabas has come to seek funds for the monasteries. Sabas will not accept money for his monasteries directly, but points out to the Emperor the need for reconstruction of damaged churches and the need to complete the church of Theotokos, the Nea.³ The tenth century Alexandrian Chronicle of the Patriarch Eutychius preserves a tradition

1. Patlagean, Pauvreté, pp.325-6, based on Vailhé.

2. Ovadiah, Corpus, nos 157 and 160.

3. 174.24-175.15.

that Sabas also complained that the Constantinian basilica at Bethlehem was small and dimly lit, and that this led to the building of the new church there.¹ These sources suggest that Sabas' diplomatic mission was a cause of Justinian's funding of church building in Palestine. Once returned to Palestine, Sabas was involved in the carrying out of the Emperor's orders.²

The massive building programme attracted a new labour force to Palestine. The number of workmen required for building on this scale was enormous. Tchalenko has calculated that the construction of the monastery of Qal'at Siman would have required a force of several thousand labourers.³ A work force of this size could not have been drawn from the local population, but would have come from the group of itinerant landless labourers travelling around the Mediterranean world.⁴ "The lowest stratum of the urban population was formed by the casual labourers, who were particularly numerous in the building industry."⁵

Sometimes monks worked on building projects. Ephraem, the 'comes Orientis', employed a bishop, who preferred manual labour to the cares of his office, on the work of rebuilding Antioch after an earthquake. Another monk worked on the construction of a reservoir in the Sinai peninsular, a project organised by John, Patriarch of Jerusalem.⁶

Another connection between the building workforce and the monasteries was through building work in the monasteries themselves. The Deacon Fidus collected an 'engineer and workmen' (ἐνα μὴ μηχανικὸν καὶ πλῆθος τεχνιτῶν) in Jerusalem before going to Euthymius' laura to build the coenobium there.⁷ The same word (τεχνίτας) is used of the labourers which Sabas took with him from the Great Laura when he went to assist the rebellious monks at the New Laura by building a church and a bakery. These men seem to have been recruited in Jerusalem, since Sabas had

1. Armstrong 'Church Building', (p.24)

2. 179.26-180.2.

3. Tchalenko, Villages Antiques Vol.1, p.229.

4. Patlagean, Pauvreté, p.166.

5. Jones, Later Roman Empire, p.858.

6. John Moschus, Prat. 37, 134. (PG 87.3: 2855D - 2888C, 2997A - D).

7. 64.16.

collected the money to pay for the building from the Patriarch.¹ Building work would not have been completed quickly, and so building labourers would have lived at the monastery while construction work was in progress. The preparation of food for the builders became a regular part of monastic hospitality.²

Demarcation between professed monks, building labourers and visitors was not clear-cut. Visitors might prolong their stay and attach themselves to the monastery. Monks might leave to take up work on secular projects. The simplicity and poverty of monastic living conditions were not only a sign of ascetic striving but also the normal way of life for the class from which many monks came.³

1. 123.25-124.1.

2. 138.11-12.

3. The social background of the monks is explored in Patlagean, Pauvreté, pp.49-53.

4 : 4. Economic activity.

The building of churches and the care of pilgrims were two ways in which the monasteries shared in the life of the society around them. They show that monks, whatever the original motive behind their vocation, did not succeed in fleeing from the secular world, but retained close links with it. "A certain wealth among the monks themselves, but also a certain dependence, emotional as well as economic, upon the wider community ... neither sort of intimacy had been originally planned, and neither was consistently welcomed. But the siting of the communities, and the concept of service that lay at their heart, made both unavoidable."¹

This verdict was passed on the communities of Pachomius in southern Egypt. Pachomius' life and foundations demonstrate clearly how monastic communities can be rooted in the life of the surrounding society. His original settlement was in the deserted village of Tabennesis, and other monasteries were to follow, many of them similarly situated.² The monasteries rejuvenated the deserted and depressed areas, and many peasants were attracted to live in these villages. Some became monks; others seem simply to have chosen to settle there. The ranks of the monks contain catachumens who are unbaptised, which suggests that the monastery drew its recruits from those who had been drawn to the area for economic as much as for religious reasons.³ The importance of the wall surrounding the monastery was not defensive (as would be the reason for building a wall in Palestine) but the sheer necessity of providing a demarcation line between those living in the monastery and those outside it.⁴ The monastery shared fully in the economic life of the region. We read of groups of monks sent out to sell the produce and to buy what was necessary, going out to work in the morning, including helping in the reaping.⁵ The complexity of the organisation

1. P. Rousseau, Pachomius (Berkeley, California 1985) p.173.

2. VPachG 12; 29 (Athanassakis 16.1; 38.6-23).

3. VPachG 23 (Athanassakis 30.19-20).

4. VPach Bo 49,141.

5. VPach Bo 26,117.

is shown by the rendering of the accounts at the end of the year when monks would read the records of their manual labour, and by the appointment of Akulas "the accountant who kept the books for the steward who was over all the communities in the *koinonia*".¹ The monasteries played an important economic role in the life of decaying agricultural communities. The reason for their steady growth is this response to social needs of the people.² It provides the best example of the category of economic activity described by Patlagean as 'la communauté agricole.'³

The economic base of the monasteries of the Judaeen desert was very different. It is that described by Patlagean as 'la communauté d'artisans.' The nature of this economic activity is shown in the words used to describe the monks' dwellings.

The building in which the monk lived was called the cell or *κῆλλιον*. The *κῆλλιον* described the simple lodging of a poor man in which he worked, slept and lived.⁴ Cells excavated in the Egyptian desert were two roomed buildings inside a closed courtyard with a well and a small garden.⁵ A similar pattern was followed in Palestine, although not all cells were so substantial.⁶ The cells of Euthymius' monastery were scattered over an open plain in the desert, a sight which impressed Eudocia, but were flimsy enough to be quickly demolished by Fidus' team of labourers and were replaced by the more permanent buildings of the coenobium.⁷ In the ravines, the monks often lived in a cave.⁸ Like the cells of the poor in secular life, they were places of work as much as places to live.

1. VPachG¹ 144,147. (Athanassokis, pp.188,194)
2. Palladius reports that there were 7,000 monks in the Pachomian monasteries; Jerome 50,000. See P.Ladeuze *Etude sur le cénobitisme pachomien* (edn. Frankfurt 1961)pp.204-6.
3. See above, pp.119-120.
4. Patlagean, *Pauvreté*, p.58.
5. Guillaumont, *Origines*, p.153.
6. The cells of the Judaeen desert are described by Y.Hirschfeld in 'Judaeen Desert Monasteries' pp.186-194. He contrasts the cells of the laura which were often 4 x 5m. with the smaller cells of the coenobium, which measured about 2 m. square.
7. 53.13; 63.25-26.
8. For example in the Laura of Firminus in the Wadi Suweinit. See M.Marcoff and D.Chitty. 'Notes on Monastic Research in the Judaeen Wilderness, 1928-9', *PEFQSt* (1929) 167-178 (pp.168-169).

A collection of cells was described as a *λαύρα*. The monastic use of this term does not occur in fourth century Egyptian sources and seems to have originated in Palestine. It can refer to a 'ravine' but its more usual use is to describe the lanes or alleyways of a town, with small houses on either side. The word was a natural choice for the *lauras* set in gorges, where a path led along the side of the ravine with caves or huts leading off it. One of the earliest known monastic settlements, the foundation of which was attributed to Chariton in the fourth century, was the Old Laura or Souka, in the Wadi Khureitun, south of Bethlehem. Chitty suggests that Souka is the equivalent of the Syriac Shouga or Arabic suq, which would in turn be rendered in Greek by *λαύρα*.¹ The narrow suq, with its jostling crowds and numerous little workshops is a familiar sight in any Middle Eastern town. It points to the fact that the *λαύρα* is a form of market where goods are bought and sold. Its primary reference is economic.

When *lauras* were built on a flat plain, the cells were scattered around a central set of buildings rather than spaced along a main path. But the basic character of a number of small self-contained dwellings remained.

The living conditions in the Palestinian *lauras* differed according to the location but the economic arrangements described followed a similar pattern.² They are set out in a description of Gerasimus' monastery interpolated into the Life of Euthymius. "On Saturdays and Sundays they came to the church and partook of the Divine mysteries, then they went into the coenobium to eat cooked food. ... Each of them carried to the coenobium on Saturday the work he had done in the week, and on Sunday evening he took provisions for the week, bread, dates, water and palms, and went back to his cell".³ Sabas is described as following a similar regime in a cave near the monastery of Thecctistus.⁴

1. D.Chitty, The Desert a City (Oxford 1966) pp.15-16.

2. Hirschfeld, Judaean Desert Monasteries, pp.134-144.

3. In MH, p.228.

4. 94.7-12.

A variety of goods were made, including ropes and baskets.¹ The laura possessed mules which were used to transport finished goods to the market and to buy necessary provisions.² This arrangement enabled monks to work, sell their produce and buy food. "Derrière les commentaires spirituels se dessinent les faits économiques, la multiplication de petits artisans libres, dispersés et sans famille, rattaché cependant à d'autres hommes seuls par des solidarités religieuses, à un marché par la nécessité des échanger".³

Alongside the crafts practised in the cells went the tasks required for the smooth running of the community. John the Hesychast, on his arrival at Sabas' laura, fulfilled a variety of duties - fetching water, cooking for the labourers, helping with the transport of stones, and guest-master (ξενόδοχος).⁴ Earlier Sabas had been asked to serve the monks in similar tasks.⁵

Numerous studies have analysed the growing pressure on the poor in the fifth and sixth centuries.⁶ They describe the causes of the deterioration in the living conditions of the poor and its results. An important factor was the pressure of taxation which could force peasants to abandon their land and to seek employment with a neighbouring landowner. This abandonment of land and flight from the tax collector was known as ἀναχώρησις - a term long used of villagers in Egypt who had opted out in moments of distress or oppression - becoming a displaced person.⁷ The use of the same term both for this flight caused by economic pressure and for the entering into a monastic way of life implies that many were led to the monastery because of lack of livelihood outside. John Cassian discusses three kinds of monastic vocation - that from God, through a dream or vision; that from man, through the example of a holy man; and that through necessity, when circumstances such as the death of a loved one or loss of property lead to compunction.⁸

1. 14.12-13; 94.10-12.

2. 28.13-17.

3. Patlagean, Pauvreté, p.316.

4. 205.17-206.15.

5. 92.5-15.

6. de Ste.Croix, Class Struggle pp.453-461; Jones, Later Roman Empire, p.810-1; 1043-5; Patlagean Pauvreté, *passim*.

7. P.Brown, The World of Late Antiquity (London 1971) p.98. But P.Rousseau (Pachomius pp.9-12) argues that the need of peasants to escape the burden of taxation has been exaggerated and that small scale farming was still profitable.

8. Cassian, Collationes 3.4 (SC. pp.141-3). Compare Vööbus, Asceticism in the Syrian Orient, Vol.2.p.120, for economic pressure on labourers to become monks.

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The monasteries provided an environment in which the monk could continue his work and receive, in return for it, what he needed to live. This suggests that the monasteries were responding to a need in the changing social conditions of the Late Roman Empire. They cared for the poor, not only by providing food and lodging, but a permanent employment and home for those who were able "S'il est vrai que les rôles sociaux sont transposés et non effacés lors de l'entrée au cloître, la société monastique doit logiquement recevoir en plus grand nombre des pauvres, vêtus en quête de travail s'ils le peuvent, ou d'assistance s'ils sont invalides La monastère a-t-il été le terme des itinéraires spirituels ou le havre des déracinements sociaux?"¹

1. Patlagean, Pauvreté, p.33.

Chapter Five.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PALESTINIAN MONASTERIES

5:1. Origins.

Among the claimants to the title of the first monk in Palestine must be included Bishop Narcissus of Jerusalem. Eusebius tells how his energetic and conscientious way of life aroused a sense of guilt in some of the less virtuous members of his church. They promoted intrigues and slanders against the saintly bishop who became wearied by these troubles and so, since "he had long ago embraced the philosophic life...turning his back on the church community, he fled into a remote and desert area where he remained in hiding for many years".¹ This retirement into a desert hermitage took place in the early third century and is an example of what has been referred to by A.Guillaumont as 'pre-monasticism'.² Guillaumont's study is one of several in recent years to demonstrate that the monastic life is a manifestation of the tendency towards celibacy, asceticism and solitude inherent in the Christian tradition - and, for that matter, in classical sources.³

There is no suggestion that Bishop Narcissus was anything but an isolated phenomenon, an individual responding to the pressures of office by using the time-honoured method of withdrawal. He did not found a community. This development in the life of the Palestinian church took place a century later. Jerome claims that the first monastic community in Palestine was founded by Hilarion, a native of Thavatha near Gaza, who was educated in Alexandria and fell under the influence of Antony. He returned to Gaza in 308 AD, bringing with him the example of this new way of life, and, thereby, initiating the monastic tradition in Syria as well as in Palestine. Before Hilarion, Jerome tells us, "there were no monasteries in

1. Eusebius, HE 6.9.8 (SC Vol2 99.10-14).
2. A.Guillaumont, Aux origines du monachisme chrétien, Spiritualité orientale 30 (Bégrolle en Mauges 1979) p.218.
3. For example, K.Heussi, Der Ursprung des Mönchtums (Tübingen 1939); P.Rousseau, Pachomius (Berkeley, California 1985); A.Vööbus, A History of Asceticism in the Syrian Orient, CSCO Subsidia 14 and 17 (Louvain 1958, 1960).

Palestine nor did anyone know any monks in Syria". From then on progress was brisk. "Through his example innumerable monasteries were established throughout all Palestine and all the monks rushed to him".¹ We need to allow for a measure of exaggeration in our assessment of Jerome's enthusiastic account of the saint's achievement, but alternative evidence for Hilarion's life in Sozomen's Church History establish him as a significant figure in the development of the monastic life in Palestine.²

Alternative traditions describe Chariton, who had been a confessor at Iconium at the time of the Emperor Aurelian's persecution.³ He came on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and settled in a cave at 'Ain Fara, about six miles from the city. A community grew up around him, and a church is said to have been consecrated for the use of the community by Archbishop Macarius in 330. Subsequently, Chariton founded two other monasteries; one at Douka, on the peak of the mountain where, according to tradition, Jesus was tempted and the other at Souka, near Thekoa. The Life of Chariton was written, its author tells us, long after the death of the saint and did not have earlier written sources to depend on.⁴ Although the account is late, it can be supplemented by other sources which provide independent testimony for the existence of Chariton's three monasteries in the fourth century. The Life of Euthymius describes its subject living at Pharan or 'Ain Fara between 406 and 411, by which time it was a well-established monastery.⁵ Douka was visited by Palladius in 386; and Souka could well have the monastery in the Thekoa area where, according to John

1. Jerome, Vita Hilarionis 14.17.24, in W.A.Oldfather (ed), Studies in the Text Tradition of St Jerome's Vitae Patrum (Urbana 1943) pp.316-317.
2. Sozomen, HE 3.14.21-27; 5.10.1-4 (GCS pp.120-122,206-207). See for a modern assessment F-M.Abel, Histoire de la Palestine, Vol 2 (Paris 1952) pp.292-294.
3. Aurelian was Emperor from 270 to 275.
4. Vita Charitonis 14 (PG 116; 917C-D). This work, dating from the late sixth century, is often thought to have been influenced by Cyril. See D.J.Chitty, The Desert a City (Oxford 1966) p.15; G.Garitte, 'La vie prémétaphrastique de S.Chariton', BIHBR 21(1940)5-50 (p.9).
5. 14.9-20.

Cassian, there was a massacre of monks by Arab tribes.¹

These alternative traditions confirm the statement of A. Guillaumont. "En Palestine... on a la preuve de l'existence, dès le début, d'établissements monastiques indépendant de S.Hilarion".² The foundations of Chariton and Hilarion are examples of a movement which arose spontaneously in many parts of the Christian world. "Le monachisme est apparu en plusieurs points de la de chrétienté de facon indépendants et presque simultanée".³

Cyril describes the next phase of the development of monasticism in Palestine. When Euthymius arrived in the country, monastic life was well-established. He was able to visit the "God-bearing fathers of the desert", to compare and learn from their virtues and from them "he set a seal on his own soul" (τῇ ἑαυτοῦ ψυχῇ ἐνσφραγισόμενος).⁴ He then took up residence at Pharan and his experiences at this monastery had a lasting influence on him. In founding his own monasteries, Euthymius kept in mind the way of life led by the fathers at Pharan. Both the monastery at Wadi Mukellik, which was presided over by Theoctistus, and his own monastery at Khan el-'Ahmar were intended to be lauras similar to Pharan (λαύραν κατὰ τὸν τύπον φαράν).⁵ In thus emphasising Euthymius' connections with the already established monasteries, Cyril makes clear that his foundations constitute the second generation of Palestinian monasteries, building on the pioneering work of Chariton and others. During the life-time of Euthymius and Sabas the monastic movement saw dramatic growth in both numbers and influence. "All the desert was colonised by his (Euthymius') seed".⁶

1. Palladius, HLaus 48 (Butler, 142.13); Cassian, Collationes 6.1 (SC p.219). For the history of the foundations, see S.Vailhé, 'Les premières monastères de la Palestine', Bess 3(1897-7)39-58.
2. Guillaumont, Origines, p.218.
3. Guillaumont, Origines, p.217. For this view, see also P.Canivet, Le monachisme syrien selon Théodoret de Cyr, Théologie Historique 42 (Paris 1977) p.27; Voobus, History of Asceticism, Vol 2, pp.111-117.
4. 14.6-8.
5. 16.26; 26.17. Schwartz (Kyrillos, pp.358-359) incorrectly interprets this statement as showing that Euthymius based his life on Egyptian traditions learnt at Pharan. But Pharan had no special connection with Egypt.
6. 24.4.

This stage of the history of the desert monasteries took place in response to political, social and economic pressures, as has been shown in the previous section. Cyril's understanding of the nature of this development can be seen clearly through a comparison of the two figures of Euthymius and Sabas. The analysis of the two Lives has shown the common structure into which the material is fitted.¹ Within this two threads interweave. Episodes describing the saint's struggles on behalf of the orthodox faith are interspersed with episodes describing their virtues and ascetic achievements. It is this second group of passages which most clearly demonstrates the difference between the contributions of the two saints, a difference not in personality only but between the two institutions over which they presided. The passages illuminate the development of monasticism in Palestine.

1. See the table on pp. 67-68.

5:2. The Contribution of Euthymius.

An important theme in the Life of Euthymius is the description of the saint's ascetic achievements and teaching.¹

He is portrayed as a lover of solitude. This is shown by his reluctance to involve himself in the life of his monasteries. After he had first settled in the desert and was living with Theoctistus in a cave, he was discovered by some shepherds who noised his fame abroad. Quickly, a community built up around him.² Euthymius became profoundly discouraged and decided, in spite of the pleas of the monks, that he would have to leave.³ Later, when he returned to settle in the vicinity of Theoctistus' monastery, he avoided living in the monastery itself but preferred to stay at a distance, visiting his former colleagues only once a week, on Sundays. He decided on this course of action because of his desire for the silence of his new residence - *πόθω τῆς ἐν τῷ τόπῳ ἡσυχίας*.⁴

The word *ἡσυχία* and its derivatives occur frequently in the Life of Euthymius. While he was still in Melitene, he is described as "*φιλομούχρος... ἐκ παιδόθεν καὶ... ἐπιποθῶν τὴν ἡσυχίαν*".⁵ This love of solitude was one of the motives behind his journey to Jerusalem and, once arrived, he settled in a hermit's cell at Pharan. "*φιλήσυχος ὢν ἔμεινεν εἰς ἀναχυρητικὸν κελλίον ἔξω τῆς λαύρας*".⁶ The love of silence is referred to repeatedly throughout the Life.⁷ Euthymius preferred to retire from the secular world, and to avoid contact with church or state officials.⁸ Even Eudocia only obtained an interview with him after lengthy negotiation.⁹ Festugière points to the connection

1. Sections 6, 8, 9, 14, 17, 23 of the table on pp.67-68.

2. 16.7-14.

3. 21.20-22.2; with a contrast drawn between his name and his state of mind - *γενόμενος ἐν πολλῇ ἀθυρίᾳ ὁ τῆς εὐθυμίας ἐπώνυμος*.

4. 24.8-10.

5. 13.17-18.

6. 14.10-11.

7. For example; 13.8; 15.1; 17.4; 19.19; 20.2; 29.2; 30.9; 31.3; 51.20.

8. For example; 44.18-45.5; 51.22-52.18; 53.19-26.

9. 48.15-16.

between the term ἡσυχία and withdrawal from society and the company of others. "L'hesychaste est proprement l'anachorète. celui qui s'est retiré".¹

Euthymius' way of life and teaching is modelled on traditions from Egypt. Transport to Egypt was not difficult. A road along the coast connected Alexandria and Jerusalem. It was the oldest road in the area, completed during the First Jewish Revolt during which, according to Josephus, Titus marched with his troops from Alexandria to Caesarea.² It had at first connected Alexandria and Antioch and was extended to Jerusalem via Antipatris and Gophna.³ The distance from Jerusalem to Alexandria is approximately 200 miles, two thirds of the distance from Alexandria to the Pachomian monasteries of Upper Egypt, so, not surprisingly, the highway was well-used by monks and pilgrims.

Evidence is plentiful in monastic literature for the close relationship between the monasteries of Egypt and Palestine. Visits from Jerusalem monks to Antony were sufficiently common for him to instruct his disciples to ask visitors where they came from. If they said they were from Egypt, a meal was to be prepared; but if they came from Jerusalem, then a spiritual discourse would be expected.⁴ Many Palestinian monks settled in Egypt for a while and then returned to Palestine. Abba Silvanus, the subject of twenty-six sayings in the Apophthegmata Patrum, was a Palestinian who lived with twelve disciples at Scetis, then led them to Sinai, then to Gaza before finally founding a monastery at Gerara.⁵ Martyrius and Elias, from Cappadocia

1. MO 3/1, p.55. Festuzière notes that Sabas does not seem to share Euthymius' commitment to silence, being a man of action. "Autant que je sache, ils (ἡσυχία and its derivatives) n'apparaissent pas dans la Vie de Sabas, du moins pour Sabas lui-même". In fact, Cyril shows that, in spite of Sabas' exertions on behalf of the monks, he retained his love of solitude. The word ἡσυχία is used of him on several occasions. For example, 93.24; 94.5; 95.15; 120.25.
2. Josephus, Jewish Wars 3.6.2 (LCL Vol 2, pp.610-615).
3. M.Avi-Yonah, 'The Development of the Roman Road System in
4. See B.Ward, Introduction to the Lives of the Desert Fathers. (London and Oxford 1980), p.4.
5. For Silvanus see L.Régnauld, 'Les apophtegmes des pères en Palestine', Irén 54(1981)320-330.

and Arabia respectively, had been monks at Nitria but fled to Palestine during the unrest in Egypt following Timothy the Cat's murder of Proterius. They stayed for a while at Euthymius' monastery before founding their own communities and becoming successive Patriarchs of Jerusalem.¹ The easy communications between monasteries in the two countries allowed Egyptian traditions to influence Palestinian monasticism.

The Egyptian influence on Euthymius showed itself in a variety of ways. In a section which was, according to Cyril, inspired by Cyriac, it is reported that "honoured fathers often visited Euthymius from Egypt" (παρὰ τῶν ἐξ Αἰγύπτου διαφόρων παραβαλλόντων αὐτῷ τιμίον πατέρων διεξερχομένων) and told him about the way of life of Arsenius, who had settled at Scetis in 394 and was probably still alive at the time when this episode is said to have taken place.² Euthymius was impressed and modelled his own ascetic practices on those of the famous Egyptian monk. The ascetic achievements which are said, in this passage, to be modelled on those of Arsenius are also to be found in the Apophthegmata about Arsenius.³ The visiting Egyptian fathers also told Euthymius several improving anecdotes which he, in turn, used in his instruction of his monks. Faced with an act of rebellion by two monks, Maron and Clematius, who planned to leave the monastery without his blessing, Euthymius encouraged them to remain, completing his words with a story - "for the confirmation of what has been said, listen to a story of certain Egyptian fathers which they described to me".⁴

1. 50.20-51.21. For further references to Egyptian monks in Jerusalem, see John Cassian, Institutes 4.31.5-9 (SC p.170). Itin Aeth 49.1 (SC p.319).
2. 34.10-16. Arsenius died in 440 and this incident took place some time after 431.
3. See MH, p.56.
4. 30.27-28. Compare 36.30-31. These passages contain several parallels with the Apophthegmata and other ascetic writings. The use made by Euthymius of Egyptian teaching material is pointed to by Régnauld as evidence for the circulation of the Apophthegmata in Palestine before being collected into the written versions known to us. See Régnauld, 'Apophtegmes' (p.32).

Not only did Euthymius model his conduct and his ascetic teaching on Egyptian traditions but he also introduced Egyptian customs into his monastery. Among these was his refusal to allow an unbearded monk to stay in the laura. In these cases he arranged for the youth to spend a period in a neighbouring coenobium. This was to save the monks from temptation - presumably the coenobitic life offered greater supervision for all. He seems to have made this insistence throughout his ministry. When he first received disciples, he required one monk to watch over his younger brother and not to allow him to leave his cell. The Egyptian provenance of this passage is clear from a parallel with the Apophthegmata Patrum.¹ This rule became an accepted feature of life in the Palestinian monasteries. Sabas was required to live in the monastery of Theoctistus before progressing to the solitary life, and he made a similar requirement of the monks who he accepted.² As a result, associations were formed between the monasteries of Euthymius, Theoctistus and Gerasimus; and between those of Sabas and Theodosius. The relationship between the laurae of Euthymius and Sabas and the coenobia in the neighbourhood enabled monks to graduate from one monastery to another and contributed to the peaceful co-existence of the communal and solitary ways of life.³

Cyril presents Euthymius as a solitary, a lover of silence, whose life follows the pattern set by the early Egyptian ascetics. His monastery came into existence as a result of others coming to learn from him and settling in the neighbourhood of his cell, and it grew as more monks arrived.⁴ The relationship between Euthymius and his monks was that of teacher and disciple. His example and his authority were the forces which created and sustained the life of

1. 26.2-3, with a parallel with ApophPatr Eudaimon 1 (PG 65; 176B).
2. 50.5-6; 91.8-9; 91.21-26.
3. This is in contrast to the tension between the two ideals in Egypt, where the solitary life was valued, and Asia Minor, with its preference for the communal. See K.Holl, Enthusiasmus und Bussgewalt beim griechischen Mönchtums (Leipzig 1898, new edn Hildesheim 1969) pp.172-178.
4. 25.13-14.

the community. Cyril describes how discipline was administered directly by the saint. He presents a picture of the fathers gathered together on a Saturday. A problem is brought before Euthymius; the advice and, if necessary, the correction is given to the brother concerned; those present are edified by observing what has taken place.¹ There is a similar scene when Euthymius realised that his death was imminent. He called the fathers together into the church at the time of the observation of the memorial of St Antony. There he gave instruction and commands to his disciples and arranged for the appointment of a successor and the future development of the monastery.²

By its nature, a group of monks gathered around a teacher is a temporary phenomenon. The laura was destroyed and rebuilt as a coenobium within ten years of the death of Euthymius.³ Cyril's excessive care in claiming this to have been in response to Euthymius' death-bed command, repeated in his apparition to the deacon Fidus in the course of the latter's ship-wreck, suggests that some embarrassment was felt at the speedy disintegration of the community and that a justification was felt to be necessary.⁴ The Saracen Camp of Tents was also destroyed at this time.⁵

The lasting contribution of Euthymius was not through the institution which he founded but through his influence on the subsequent development of the monasteries. He was the mediator of the established traditions associated with the figure of Chariton and with Egypt, passing them on to future generations of monks. The desert was colonised not by Euthymius himself but by his descendants (ὑπὸ πῶν αὐτοῦ σπερμάτων πολιτοδείσης ἐρήμου).⁶ Cyril describes how the saint's early disciples rose to prominent positions in the church.

1. 28.9-29; 29.27-32.5.

2. 57.23-59.15; a passage modelled on the death of Antony. See G.Garitte, 'Réminiscences de la Vie d'Antoine dans Cyrille de Scythopolis' in Silloge Bizantina in onore de Silvio Giuseppe Mercati (Rome 1957) pp.117-122.(p.121).

3. 66.15-16.

4. 58.28; 63.24-27.

5. 67.21-68.2.

6. 24.4.

His first followers, Marinus and Luke, founded monasteries in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem, where Theodosius, the future archimandrite of the coenobites, stayed before founding his own monastery.¹ The three Cappadocian brothers, Cosmas, Chrysippus and Gabriellus, became respectively Bishop of Scythopolis, staurophylax at the Church of the Anastasis and Superior of Eudocia's Convent of St Stephen.² Domnus became Patriarch of Antioch.³ The three Melitenian brothers, Stephen, Andrew and Gaianus, became Bishop of Jamnia, Superior of Bassa's Monastery of St Menas and Bishop of Medaba.⁴ The most celebrated of his monks were the two Patriarchs, Martyrius and Elias.⁵ In Cyril's presentation, Euthymius provided the example, the teaching and the traditions which were later embodied in the foundations of Sabas.

1. 16.9-16.

2. 25.20-26.5; 33.30-31; 49.13-19; 55.20; 66.18.

3. 26.5-7; 33.22-28.

4. 26.9-10; 49.19-23; 53.2-4.

5. 50.20-51.20.

5:3. The contribution of Sabas.

Sabas' relationship with the monasteries which he founded was very different from that of Euthymius. Whereas Euthymius provided a continuing personal supervision over his monasteries, Sabas appears to have shown little interest in their welfare. Indeed, with the exception of his first foundation, the Great Laura, there is no indication in the Life that he ever visited his monasteries after they were established.¹ They do not seem to have depended on his personal presence to guide them.

Nor do they appear to have depended on a tradition of ascetic teaching originating from him. There is no piece of sustained instruction attributed to Sabas by Cyril. Teaching is in the form of remarks addressed to the novices; of a brief explanation as to why he has taken a certain decision ; or of a rebuke given to an offending monk.² Nowhere in the Life of Sabas is there the equivalent of the lengthy address of Antony to his disciples or of the continual questioning of older monks by disciples seeking a 'word'.³ In Cyril's portrayal, Sabas is not a teacher. The monasteries do not seem to have depended on his guidance in the leading of the ascetic life.

Nor do they appear to have been held in subjection under a dominant authority. Sabas was not a powerful leader. Cyril writes that although he was pugnacious towards devils, he was meek in his dealings with men (πραῦς μὲν ὑπάρχων πρὸς ἀνθρώπους, μαχητὴς δὲ πρὸς δαίμονας).⁴ Faced with opposition from a rebellious faction within the monastery, he preferred withdrawal to the challenge of disciplining

1. Distance could not have been a reason for this, as they were close enough to the Great Laura for easy communication.
2. 113.10-15 for remarks addressed to novices; 130.8-10 for an explanation of a decision; 131.10-16 and 138.3-7 for rebukes to offenders.
3. VAnton 16-43 . This discourse comprises over a quarter of the total length of the Life. The basic form of the Apophthegmata Patrum is the asking and answering of questions.
4. 118.28-29.

the offenders.¹ He was also patient and persistent in exhorting heretics to renounce their error and to return to the fold of the Catholic Church.² As all monastic leaders, Sabas could be firm in his treatment of individual monks, as is shown especially in the cycle of stories about the monk Jacob, but this approach to individuals should be distinguished from his reluctance to act authoritatively in relation to the institutional life of the monasteries.³

If, then, Sabas was neither an ever-present guide and pastor to the monks, nor a wise ascetic teacher, nor a powerful authoritarian leader - what was he?

The comparison of the structure of the Lives of Euthymius and Sabas shows that the passages in the Life of Euthymius which describe ascetic teaching are equivalent to those describing the foundation of monasteries in the Life of Sabas.⁴ The founding of monasteries was the main achievement of Sabas' life. "Sabas, the wise and knowledgeable teacher, the advocate of orthodoxy and condemner of heresy, the faithful and prudent steward who multiplied talents from God...has colonised the desert with a multitude of monks and has founded there seven monasteries".⁵ After this summary of the life's work of the saint, Cyril lists the monasteries by name. They consist of three lauras, including the two which are claimed to be the most important among the lauras of Palestine, and four coenobia. One of the lauras, the Great Laura, is still occupied by monks today. This unbroken history makes it the oldest Christian monastery in the world.⁶

A phrase used continually by Cyril is "colonise the desert".⁷

1. 118.29-30; 120.13-27.

2. 128.11-12.

3. 129.3-132.19.

4. See above pp. 67-68.

5. 158.12-15.

6. For the later history of the monastery, see G.Heydock, Der heilige Sabas und seine Reliquien (Geisenheim 1970); and for an account of life in the monastery in this century, see E.Mercenier, 'Le monastère de Mar Saba', Irén 20(1947)283-297.

7. For example, 126.5; 158.17.

One example of its use occurs when Sabas went to Jerusalem as a young man. He undertook this journey, Cyril wrote, because "it was necessary that the desert should be colonised by him" (ἐδεῖ γὰρ δι' αὐτοῦ ταύτην πολισθῆναι).¹ The phrase is influenced by its use in the Life of Antony. ἡ ἔρημος ἐπολίσθη ὑπὸ μοναχῶν ἐξελεθόντων ἀπὸ τῶν ἰδίων καὶ ἀπογραφάμενων τὴν ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς πολιτείαν.² In the Life of Antony the description of the monastery as a city is metaphorical. The monk's true citizenship is in heaven. A common title for a monk is ὁ οὐρανοπολίτης, the citizen of heaven.³ It is in this sense that the phrase provides the title for D.J.Chitty's study, The Desert a City. The monks' sense of belonging to heaven rather than earth led them to retire from the urban life of the Empire and to live in deserted and isolated places. The point of the phrase is precisely that the desert was not the city.

But for Cyril the City in the Desert is not a metaphor. It was the description of an actual process. Sabas encouraged his monks to build their own cells if they could afford to do so. "Whoever founds or re-founds a cell in this place; it is as if he is founding the Church of God".⁴ The action of physically building up the monastery was in itself a contribution to the building up of the Church. New cells and new monasteries led to a physical extension of the church into places where it had not existed before.

It was inevitable that Cyril should describe this process using language current in the society in which he lived. That society was an urban society. "The Byzantine Empire was an agglomeration of cities, self-governing communities responsible for the administration of the areas which they occupied...Constitutionally and administratively the cities were the cells of which the Empire was composed".⁵ The City was a social entity built up out of a network of social relationships

1. 90.9.

2. VAntony 14 (PG 26; 865B).

3. For examples in Cyril, 8.20; 84.24; 235.27.

4. 113.22-24.

5. A.H.M.Jones, The Later Roman Empire, 4 vols (Oxford 1964) p.712.

and values. "On entendra par cité une forme citadine des rapports sociaux, explicitement fondé sur des valeurs civiques, la concorde entre les citoyens, la compétition en générosité des citoyens éminents et sur un classement social tout entier déterminé par les exigences de vie et survie de la forme citadine".¹

Since the cities were the units out of which the Empire was built, it follows that the founding of new cities was the means by which Roman civilisation was extended. The Emperors took pride in the cities which they established, often giving their own name to the newly created polis.² The Emperor Diocletian, in granting the rank of city to the village of Tymandus, stated that it lay near to his heart that "throughout the whole of our dominions the honour and number of the cities should be increased". Constantine declared that "the inhabitants of Orcistus, from now on a town and a city, have furnished a welcome opportunity for our munificence. For, to us, whose aim it is to found new cities or to restore the ancient or to re-establish the moribund, their petition was most acceptable".³ The only part of the Empire which did not have the benefit of being divided into cities were parts of the Diocese of Oriens. These were mainly frontier areas in Arabia, Palestine I and Palestine II, which were backward and not yet fully developed. They contained the towns of Jericho, Gadara and Livias.⁴ Sabas lived in a society which valued civic culture and in one of the few areas of the Empire in which the civilising effects of urban administration had not yet been applied. It was an area waiting to be urbanised.

The founding of a city involved two processes. First, there had to be building, for example the "fortification of a previously unwallled town or village, or...some public buildings".⁵ Second, there had to be people, which could involve a transfer of population. Once

1. E.Patlagean, Pauvreté économique et pauvreté sociale à Byzance. 4e-7e siècles (Paris 1977) p.9.
2. Jones, Later Roman Empire, p.719-720.
3. ILS 6090, 6091.
4. Jones, Later Roman Empire, p.713.
5. Jones, Later Roman Empire, p.720.

founded, the city had a responsibility to provide whatever was necessary for civilised living. "It was the duty of the city to preserve law and order, and all must have possessed some kind of police force... The most onerous responsibility of the city council was to ensure that bread was bought and sold at reasonable prices... All cities worthy of the name had a drainage system and a public water supply... Public baths were considered an essential amenity of civilised life, and every self-respecting city retained one or two... The larger cities had their education and health services... The heaviest burden which fell on the civil authorities was the maintenance of public works".¹

The founding of a monastery followed a similar pattern. A monastic community needed much the same facilities as a secular city. The accounts describing how the monasteries of Sabas came into being show how the community was built up in successive stages.

The monasteries were built in the desert. The desert was an area under the control of devils, wild beasts and Saracen tribes.² First, it had to be reclaimed from them. The devils were driven out after a huge test of spiritual strength in which they found themselves vanquished by the holy man. Sabas retired into the desert after the death of Euthymius. While there, he prayed and through his prayer overcame the wild beasts and the devils. "From then on God subjected to him every venomous and carnivorous beast".³ After that, six Saracens who tried to attack Sabas were swallowed up by the earth. "From then on our father Sabas received from God the divine grace not to be frightened by the plans of the Saracens".⁴ Later Sabas expelled the devils from the hill of Castellion. As they left the devils shouted: "What violence we suffer from you, Sabas, it is not enough that the ravine should be made into a city by you (ὁ χεῖμαρρος ὁ πολιθεῖς παρὰ σοῦ), but you come up to this place of ours. Behold,

1. Jones, Later Roman Empire, pp.734-736.

2. For the desert as a habitation of devils, see MO, 1, p.31.

3. 96.9-10.

4. 97.17-18. For an analysis of this miracle, see MH, p.195.

we withdraw from what is ours".¹ Once the evil spirits, the animals and the Saracens are expelled, the place is claimed and the city can be built.

The site of the monastery is chosen by God, not by the founder. "And in prayer to God by night an angelic shape in a shining robe showed itself to him...and said, 'if you wish this desert to become a city....' ".² It then revealed the location chosen for the monastery. The foundation of the monastery is the result of divine intervention.

The first building to be erected is the tower. "First of all on the hill which is at the southern extremity of the ravine...he built a tower, wishing to secure the place which was still unoccupied".³ Towers were frequently built as part of the monastery buildings. There has been debate about their purpose. Often they were attached to the church, perhaps at the side of the facade. They would have served as lodging houses for the pilgrims and as a convenient place from which the summons to prayer, by voice or simandron, could be made.⁴ In spite of the fact that Sabas often resided in the tower, it seems that the primary purpose of towers in the Palestinian monasteries was defensive.⁵ One of Sabas' requests to Justinian was that he should order a camp (*καστρον*) to be built in the wilderness as a defence against Saracen attacks.⁶ A pilgrim contemporary with Cyril described how 800 soldiers were maintained in the desert at public expense to defend the monasteries and the hermitages.⁷ The importance of security is further shown by the arrangement of coenobia and some lauras, in which the church, cemetery, water cisterns and other buildings were

1. 110.27-111.2.

2. 97.26-98.2. Compare the voice heard by Euthymius (25.25) and the vision seen by Pachomius (*HLaus* 32, Butler 88.4-9).

3. 100.7-9.

4. Tchalenko, *Villages Antiques*, Vol 1, pp.30-33.

5. 122.26; 133.10-11; 182.18-19. See also A-J.Festugière, 'La vie de Sabas et les tours de Syrie Palestine', *RB* 70(1963) 82-92.

6. 175.15-19.

7. Antoninus Placentinus 40 (CCL p.150).

clustered inside a square walled area.¹ The place in which the monastery was built had not only to be claimed but also defended against attack.

Once the site was secure, then building could continue. The most important edifice was the church. After the tower was complete, Sabas "made a beginning of establishing the laura with the grace and co-operation of the Holy Spirit guiding him".² He built a small oratory. Later he was shown in a vision a huge cave shaped like a church.³ Churches were built at an early stage in the growth of other monasteries.⁴ Sometimes the church was built by the monks themselves, as was the case at Castellion where, after the hill had been vacated by the evil spirits, Sabas and some of the monks of the Great Laura began the construction work. Later they received assistance from workmen sent by Marcianus of Bethlehem.⁵ This account is confirmed by the appearance of the site. "The first structures of the monastery were set up hastily by unskilled hands. It would seem that the remains of the church should belong to a slightly later phase".⁶ The presence of monks with special building skills was of great value to the monastery. Two Isaurian monks, Theodulus and Gelasius, were overseers during a major expansion of the Great Laura, which included the construction of a large new church.⁷ On other occasions, the building was done by hired building labourers. This happened at the New Laura.⁸

A requirement of all cities was a supply of fresh water. After the oratory was constructed at the Great Laura and monks had begun to arrive, the community was in need of water. After he had prayed, Sabas was shown a spring. It formed the centre of the laura and provided

1. V. Corbo, 'L'ambiente materiale della Vita dei Monaci di Palestina nel periodo Bizantino', *OChrA* 153(1958)235-257; Y. Hirschfeld, 'The Judaean Desert Monasteries in the Byzantine Period' (dissertation, Jerusalem 1987), pp.181-183.
2. 100.9-11.
3. 102.1-6.
4. 111.22-23; 123.27; 126.18.
5. 111.19-20; 112.7-9.
6. J. T. Milik, 'The Monastery of Castellion', *RB* 42(1961)21-27 (p.22).
7. 117.1-12.
8. 123.22-28.

sufficient for the needs of the fathers, neither too much in winter nor too little in summer.¹ The spring, however, appears not to have been as perfectly suited to the needs of the monastery as Cyril here implies, since large cisterns had to be dug in the ravine.² Cisterns were the usual means of assuring an adequate supply of water. They have been discovered in most monasteries excavated in the Judaeen desert.³

In addition to water, a supply of food had to be provided. When the Great Laura was extended, a bakery was built, as well as a church and water cisterns.⁴ A bakery was also built at the same time as the church in the New Laura, by the workmen sent from Jerusalem.⁵ A supply of bread was a necessity for the monastery's ministry of caring for the numerous pilgrims and others who sought food and shelter, as well as for the needs of the monks themselves.⁶

Medical care was another important facility in the monastery. The Great Laura had a hospital (νοσοκομείον) and monks who were injured or sick could be treated by a doctor.⁷

Some facilities expected in a city were not provided by the monastery. A public bath was clearly inappropriate in a society which respected the avoidance of bathing rather than cleanliness and hygiene.⁸ Educational establishments seem also not to have been provided by Sabas. His lack of interest in learning led to conflict with the more intellectual monks.⁹ The absence of opportunity for

1. 101.6-19.

2. 117.14.

3. V. Corbo, Gli Scavi di Kh. Siyar el-Ghanam (Campo dei Pastori) e i monasteri dei dintorni (Jerusalem 1955) pp.5-6; Hirschfeld, 'Judaeen Desert Monasteries', pp.200-206.

4. 117.7, where the word used is μαγειρείον.

5. 123.27, where the word used is ἀρτοκοπτεῖον.

6. Theodore of Petra, VThds 37.2-19; 74.5-76.5.

7. 117.8; 131.26-27. Compare Theodore of Petra, VThds 35.9-14. For a fuller treatment, see H.J. Magoulias, 'The Lives of the Saints as sources of data for the History of Byzantine Medicine in the sixth and seventh centuries', ByZ 57(1964)127-

8. Not washing (ἡ ἀλουσία) was one of John the Hesychast's virtues. See 203.1.

9. 103.25-26; 122.19-125.25.

learning and study was a weakness in Sabas' foundations.

A new city needed people as well as buildings. In addition to providing the necessary amenities, the founder of a city sometimes had to arrange for the transfer of population. In the case of the monastic cities of the desert, this movement of people had already taken place. Pilgrimage was the result in part of the displacement of persons through economic or political pressure. This phenomenon produced the human resources from which the city was created. The migration of monks into the area, ostensibly attracted by the reputation of the founder, was the cause of the establishing of the monastery. We are told that the Great Laura came into existence at the point when Sabas decided to accept those who wanted to join him. Very many of the scattered anchorites and 'grazers' (βοσκοί) came and remained with him.¹ It was only when their number reached seventy that Sabas began the process of building up the monastery-city.² In the case of the New Laura, sixty monks had withdrawn from the Great Laura and had - eventually - settled at the site of the deserted monastery of Romanus.³ It was because of the absence of a church and the obvious need for a properly equipped monastery that Sabas made arrangements for money and workmen to be provided so that the construction work could take place.⁴ Other passages describe Sabas founding monasteries after unsuccessful attempts by others. He intervened to ensure that a community had all that was needed for a monastic life to be sustained.⁵ On the occasions when he founded monasteries in previously deserted places, they were inhabited by fathers from the Great Laura. The coenobium of Castellion was built by a group from the Great Laura and later a 'numerous community' (συνοδίαν ἱκανήν) was established there.⁶ This monastery was built as a result of the expansion of the Great Laura. The surplus population of the original settlement was moved to colonise the new area.

1. 99.17-18.

2. 100.5.

3. 122.20-123.8.

4. 123.16-28.

5. 130.16-19; 179.14-25.

6. 112.20.

Before the lifetime of Sabas, the desert was unclaimed territory, a space at the edge of the Empire where devils, beasts and barbarians roamed. As a result of Sabas' shrewd opportunism and organising ability, the growing stream of pilgrims was diverted into this wasteland and settled in well-equipped and economically viable units. The new monastery-cities were part of the fabric of the Empire, contributed to the local economy and helped to secure the borders. Their political and social role was as significant as their spiritual and religious dimension. Indeed, in the society of the time, these elements belonged together. It was the achievement of Sabas to establish this extension of the Christian Empire.

5:4. Leadership in the monasteries.

Sabas' relationship with the monastery-cities which he founded is expressed by the titles given to him by Cyril. As well as being the 'founder' (πολίτης), he was also ἄρχων; ἀρχηγέτης; ἀρχιμανδρίτης; ἑξάρχος; νομοθέτης.¹ Since Sabas is said to have had a similar position to Theodosius - and, if anything, had greater responsibilities - the titles given to Theodosius can also helpfully be applied to Sabas. These are ὁδηγός and προστάτης.²

The title ἀρχηγέτης carries with it the implication that the leader is also the founder. It points to Sabas' role as the one who has built and established the monastery, an achievement which gives him the right to leadership. The title ἀρχιμανδρίτης describes an ecclesiastical authority and is discussed more fully below.³ νομοθέτης points to the continuing responsibility to provide rules to order the life of the community. προστάτης describes the function of providing for the material needs of the monastery.

Together these titles present a composite picture of the varied responsibilities of Sabas - and Theodosius - in maintaining the life of the monastic city. The monasteries were dependent on them and they would be expected to involve themselves in many aspects of community life.⁴

Maintenance of order was a continuing task. A part of the process of founding a monastery was the provision of a set of rules. In the case of the monastery of Jeremiah, Sabas "built a small oratory and some cells; he allowed some brothers to live there and, giving Jeremiah the responsibility of presiding over them, he handed over to them the rules of the Great Laura" (παρὰ τοῦς ἀδελφοῖς τοῦς τῆς ἑαυτοῦ Μεγίστης Λαύρας κανόνας).⁵ These rules were later committed

1. 166.15 for ἄρχων; 91.23 for ἀρχηγέτης; 115.23 for ἀρχιμανδρίτης; 115.24 for ἑξάρχος; 91.23 and 116.14 for νομοθέτης.
2. 115.21-26; 166.24-26.
3. See pp.171-174.
4. Compare 123.15,16-28; 147.27.
5. 179.20-22.

to the monks by Sabas on his death-bed and, at this stage, they were written down (παραγγείλας αὐτῷ πὰς παραδόσεις τὰς παραδοθείσας ἐν τοῖς ὑπ' αὐτὸν μοναστηρίοις ἀτρώτους διαφυλάττει δούς αὐτῷ ταύτας ἐγγράφῳ).¹ A document which purports to be this rule handed over by Sabas to his successor, Meletius, was discovered by A. Dmitrijevskij in a twelfth or thirteenth century manuscript on Mount Sinai. It is entitled τύπος καὶ παράδοσις καὶ νόμος τῆς σεβασμίας λαύρας τοῦ ἁγίου Σάββα and contains a number of regulations which governed life in the monastery.²

This text, as it has reached us, comes from a period later than Sabas' life. Many of the rules, however, reflect the problems and concerns which existed while the saint was alive. One rule requires that no unbearded person is to be admitted into the laura. Another forbids any monk to go into the desert without the permission of the superior. Iberians and Syrians can say the psalms in their own church but must come into the Great Church for the Eucharistic Liturgy.³ No monk is to leave the monastery during the vigil on a Saturday or a Sunday. Among the rules clearly originating during a later period is the regulation that anybody behaving in an unseemly manner in the women's monastery was to be expelled immediately. Cyril makes no mention of a women's monastery under the direction of Sabas, although the saint is involved in the monastic renunciation of his mother, Sophia.⁴

The Life of Sabas describes the process by which the rules were formulated. In the day-to-day life of the monastery problems arose which required the attention of the superior. It was his responsibility to administer discipline. Cyril has collected together a series of anecdotes which deal with disciplinary processes in the section of the Life which deals with Sabas' relationships with the monks.⁵ A group

1. 182.21-23.

2. For a summary, see E.Kurtz, 'Review of A.Dmitrijevskij, Die Klosterregeln des hl. Sabas (Kiev 1890)', ByZ 3(1894)167-170; S.Vailhé, 'Les écrivains de Mar-Saba', EOr 2(1899)1-11, 33-47 (pp.2-3).

3. 105.10-12. Compare Theodore of Petra, VThds 45.6-46.3.

4. 109.10.

5. 129.3-139.19.

of these stories has been attached to the name of the monk Jacob, who is presented as the archetype of the bad monk. He tries to establish a monastery without Sabas' permission within the area of the Great Laura; he throws away unused food; he attempts to kill himself in a fit of despair. In each of these situations Sabas intervenes, finally dismissing him from the laura and sending him to live the coenobitic life with Theodosius. Eventually Jacob is restored and dies reconciled with Sabas.¹ In another story the monk Aphrodisius kills a mule in a fit of anger; then a monk on a journey stares at an attractive young woman; and a monk sent on an errand into the town falls into pride and fornication.² The preponderance of anecdotes on the theme of a fault committed by a monk and the stern discipline and eventual restoration achieved by the superior shows the importance of the role of the leader as judge and lawgiver. Sabas' residence in the tower overlooking the cells in the ravine is a visual reminder of his power over the monks.³ The way in which Sabas responded to these difficulties was remembered and formed the basis of the rules when they later came to be written down.

Sabas was expected to provide the monasteries with what they needed. The role of provider is emphasised especially at the foundation of the monastery. He bought all the necessary materials as well as workmen for the building of the New Laura (τὰ ἐπιτήδεια πάντα).⁴ When a monastery was built on the site of Eudocia's Tower on Jebel Muntar, he bought the necessary resources (again τὰ ἐπιτήδεια πάντα) and worked there himself until the coenobium was complete.⁵ He produced the money and materials for the construction of the coenobium of Zannus (τὰ ἀναλώματα καὶ τὴν λοιπὴν ὑπουργίαν ἐπιχωρηοῦντες).⁶ The role of provider is referred to by Cyril by the title of προστάτης.⁷

1. 129.3-139.19.

2. 134.9-135.28; 137.33-138.10; 139.9-10. This collection has a parallel with a similar group of stories in the Life of Euthymius, 28.9-32.5.

3. 122.26; 133.10-11; 182.18-19.

4. 123.25-26.

5. 128.22-25.

6. 133.1-2.

7. Or 'patron', 236.2.

The figure of the rural patron or *προστάτης* has been described by P.R.L.Brown in a study which gives special attention to the evidence of Libanius and Theodoret.¹ He shows that the patron played an important part in village life. He was a powerful figure who could use his influence to make village life run more smoothly. He was expected to intervene in the internal working of the community, settling disputes between villagers, ensuring that all had access to the water supply and defending the interests of the poor. Even more important was his responsibility for the relationship of the villagers with the outside world, especially when it impinged on their lives in the form of the tax collector. Libanius recognised the importance of the patron as somebody who was involved in the life of the village and was prepared to work to ensure that all its members were cared for. He was concerned when this position was exercised by the wrong people, and described how villagers would pay a bribe to the 'dux' of the province to eject the tax collector from the village and then protect them by claiming the case for his own court.² Brown argues that, in Syria, the Holy Man was in a unique position to take on the role of patron. In this use of his power lay his importance in society.³

The description of Sabas' activities in the monasteries has already shown him using his power to ensure that those under him have access to water and the means of earning a living and also to ensure that justice is maintained. His power was exercised on behalf of monks not only within the monastery but also in their relationships within the wider community.

A part of the process of building up the community was the acquisition of property in the neighbouring centres of population. With a legacy from his mother he bought a guest-house in Jericho. This action was seen as strengthening the monastery's position

1. P.R.L.Brown, 'The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in late Antiquity', *JRS* 61(1971)80-101.
2. Jones, *Later Roman Empire*, pp.772-778.
3. An example is the monk Abraham, whose life is contained in Theodoret, *HRel* 17.3 (SC Vol 2, pp.36-38).

(ὅν δὲ αὐτῆς περιουσίαν τῇ ἑαυτοῦ προσκύρωσεν λαύρα).¹ Before long he had also acquired a base in Jerusalem.² A house in Jerusalem was of especial importance. The city was the centre of pilgrimage. There, money, resources and influence could be gained, as well as new recruits for the monastery. The connection with Jerusalem added to the prestige and wealth of the monastery.³

Sabas' responsibility as patron of the monasteries is shown at its best when he set off to Constantinople to present the grievances of the inhabitants of the Holy Land. In his first visit he was granted three interviews with the Emperor Anastasius. In these, he received gifts of money for the monasteries, an assurance that Jerusalem and its Patriarch will be allowed to live in peace and a remission of the tax, *περίσσοπρακτίαν*, translated by Festugière as 'superflua descriptio'.⁴ On the occasion of his second visit to Constantinople Sabas made several requests to the Emperor Justinian. These included a further petition for a concession over taxes.⁵ Other gifts of Justinian on this occasion were money for the rebuilding of churches damaged in the Samaritan revolts, money to build a new Church of the Theotokos (the 'Nea'), a hospital and a military camp in the desert.⁶ During their meeting the Emperor Anastasius recognised the role played by Sabas and is not surprised by his request. "And you, old man, if you have nothing to ask me, why have you taken such trouble (to come here)...take these things and pray for me. I have heard that you are in charge of many monasteries in the desert".⁷ The conversations at the Imperial Court show Sabas acting as the good patron, using his influence on behalf of the monasteries, and the Emperors Anastasius and Justinian recognising his position and responding to it.

1. 102.12-15.

2. 116.9-25.

3. Compare the desire of national groups to occupy a church in the centre of Constantinople rather than in the suburbs. See Patlagean, *Pauvreté*, p.209.

4. 143.8-10; 144.1-28. See *MO* 3/2, p.72 for Festugière's translation.

5. 175.8; 177.2-3.

6. 176.24-178.9.

7. 142.26-143.10.

The title given to Sabas which is most strongly emphasised by Cyril is that of archimandrite or ~~ἐρχιμανδρίτης~~ ^{ἁρχιμανδρίτης}. This title was bestowed on Sabas and Theodosius by the Patriarch Sallustius when he was on his death-bed.¹

The word 'archimandrite' could be used in a general way to refer to the superior of a group of monks. So, when Sabas was admitted to the monastery of Flavianae, it was the archimandrite of the monastery who received him.² Archimandrite was a common title in the Byzantine Church and could be given to a deacon or layperson as well as to a priest. It was not limited to any particular status within the church. Often it applied to the superior of a prominent monastery whose authority was recognised by other monks in the neighbourhood. It was in this sense that Cyril spoke of a certain "Mamas, archimandrite of the Aposchist monks of Eleutheropolis".³

Dalmatius, a monk of Constantinople, is an example of an archimandrite whose authority was extensive. Following the deposition of Nestorius in 451, Maximianus was consecrated Patriarch. He was a comparatively weak character, unable to command the loyalty of the powerful monastic population of the capital. This power vacuum made the influence of the leader of the monks more significant. Dalmatius was recognised as the spokesman of the monks of Constantinople and used the title of archimandrite to define this role. At the Council of Ephesus in 431 he was referred to as 'archimandrite and father of monks' and he signed himself as 'priest and archimandrite father of the monasteries'.⁴

In Jerusalem, the authority of the archimandrite also extended over all the monks of the surrounding area. In the case of Passarion, who visited Euthymius' monastery in the company of the Patriarch

1. 114.23-26..

2. 87.25.

3. 147.13-14.

4. Mansi 4.1432,1257, For the use of the title 'archimandrite' and the career of Dalmatius, see G.Dagron, 'Les moines et la ville', Travaux et mémoires 4(1970)229-276 (pp.265-270).

Juvenal, the title of archimandrite of monks was combined with that of 'chorepiscop' (τὸ χωρεπίσκοπον καὶ τῶν μοναχῶν ἀρχιμανδρίτην).¹ The chorepiscop, or rural bishop, was appointed to assist the bishop of a large or prominent see. It has been suggested that the chorepiscop in the diocese of Jerusalem was not only the assistant but also the appointed successor of the bishop.² Mark the Deacon describes Porphyry being consecrated bishop by Praylius at a time when John was still Bishop of Jerusalem.³ This suggests that Praylius was exercising a ministry proper to a bishop before his actual consecration. In a similar context, Nicephorus Callistus calls Anastasius the Bishop of Jerusalem in a passage referring to a period before his consecration in 459. At that time, according to Cyril, Anastasius was the chorepiscop.⁴

By the time when Passarion was alive, the office of chorepiscop was dying out. Fifteen chorepiscops signed the canons of the Council of Nicaea but only six signed those of Chalcedon. At a local Council in Antioch they were told to 'recognise their limitations'.⁵ Passarion was the first in the succession of Jerusalem archimandrites in the list given by Cyril.⁶ Since the position of chorepiscop was falling into disuse, it is likely that the prominence of the archimandrite increased to fill the gap.

Ecclesiastical organisation normally followed the pattern of civil administration. It was usual for each city to have its own bishop. Gregory Thaumaturgus, for example, was appointed Bishop of Neocaesarea when there were only nineteen Christians in the congregation.⁷ Since the monasteries were developing into large centres of population in previously undeveloped tracts of land, it

1. 26.18-19.

2. S.Vailhé, 'Les premières monastères de la Palestine', *Bess* 3(1897-8)209-225 (pp.211-212).

3. Mark the Deacon, *VPorph* 10.1-5 (Kugener pp.10-11).

4. 47.22.; Nicephorus Callistus, *Chron* 15.13 (PG 147: 40C).

5. Jones, *Later Roman Empire*, p.879.

6. 114.27.

7. Jones, *Later Roman Empire*, p.875.

would have been seen as appropriate for the leader of the church in that area to have quasi-episcopal authority.¹

The names of the archimandrites who followed Passarion are recorded by Cyril. They include Elpidius and Gerontius, who were sent by the usurper Theodosius to persuade Euthymius to join the Aposchist cause.² After the deaths of the later archimandrites, Lazarus and Anastasius, the monasteries became disordered. "Anarchy and polyarchy prevailed among the monks".³ Marcianus was appointed to resolve the situation. He fulfilled his obligations faithfully, for example offering support to Sabas during the building of Castellion.⁴ At his death "all the monks of the desert gathered in the Patriarch's residence and by a common vote (κατὰ κοινὴν ψῆφον) elected Theodosius and Sabas".⁵ As with Dalmatius, the choice of archimandrite took into account the realities of power. The monks asked for the person best able to support them in their precarious existence.

Since the time of Passarion the focus of power had been moving out of the city of Jerusalem into the desert to the east of the city. Passarion had lived in Jerusalem, as did Gerontius. But Elpidius chose to live in the monastery of Douka, near Jericho.⁶ Sabas and Theodosius, as residents of the desert, are a further sign of the shift of emphasis in the monastic life away from the city of Jerusalem. The cities of the desert were sufficiently prominent to act as the centre of the movement.

The title of archimandrite was given to Sabas and Theodosius by the Patriarch. Sabas' close relationship with the Patriarchate of Jerusalem is in sharp contrast to that of Euthymius. There is no

1. The Bishop of the Camp of Tents was appointed to minister to converted Saracens and, although he lived in the desert, does not seem to have had jurisdiction over the Greek speaking monasteries.

2. 42.12.

3. 115.1.

4. 111.25-112.9. For Marcianus, see J.Kirchemeyer, 'Le moine Marcien (de Bethléem)', TU 80(1962)341-359; A.Van Roey, 'Rémarques sur le moine Marcien', TU 115(1975)160-177.

5. 115.15-17.

6. Palladius, HLaus 48 (Butler 142.13-14).

suggestion that Euthymius ever visited Jerusalem after his initial departure to the laura of Pharan in 405, even though his own monastery was only a few miles distant. His attitude to the Patriarch is shown in the episode when Anastasius, then recently elevated to the patriarchate, wished to visit the laura. In a passage reminiscent of an event in the life of Arsenius, Euthymius states his willingness to receive the Patriarch but reminds him that, if he does, he will have to receive every visitor who comes and his solitude will be lost.¹ The saint and the archbishop only met at the funeral of Theoctistus.²

Euthymius' relationship with Anastasius' predecessor, Juvenal, was also slight. In his instructions to Peter, Bishop of the Camp of Tents, before the latter's departure to the Council of Ephesus in 431, he tells Peter to follow the lead given by Cyril of Alexandria and Acacius of Melitene, whose orthodoxy could be confidently relied on. This episode can be explained as a sign of the close contact which Euthymius maintained with his homeland, Armenia.⁴ At the time referred to, Juvenal and Acacius shared the same dogmatic position. Both were representatives of the group around Cyril in a delegation to the Emperor Theodosius in September 431. Later their views diverged. Acacius was intransigent in his opposition to Antiochene theology, fearing that Cyril was tolerating Nestorianism in the Formulary of Reunion.⁵ Juvenal, on the other hand, made his dramatic change of sides at Chalcedon, an opportunist move which did not enhance his reputation with the monks of Judaea.⁶ Euthymius'

1. 52.10-17. Compare ApophPatr Arsenius 8 (PG 65; 89B).

2. 54.17-55.19.

3. 33.4-6.

4. 32.8-21. Compare 27.5-24.

5. For the role of Acacius, see R.V.Sellers, The Council of Chalcedon (London 1961) p.13. Acacius' rejection of the Formulary of Reunion is reported in Cyril, Ep 40 ad Acacium (PG 77; 184B).

6. E.Honigmann ('Juvenal of Jerusalem', DOP 5(1950)209-279 at p.247) claims that Juvenal behaved properly - as did other defecting supporters of Dioscorus - at Chalcedon, since Dioscorus was deposed for reasons of church discipline rather than for doctrinal deviance. For Monophysite dislike of Juvenal, see John Rufus, Plerophoria 4;40-42 (PO pp.15-16,91-93).

ignoring of the name of Juvenal in his instructions before the Council of Ephesus could reflect later monastic dislike of Juvenal as well as Euthymius' distance from the Patriarch.

Sabas, in contrast, was closely involved with the Church in Jerusalem. The Patriarchs who were in office in his lifetime included men who shared his background in Euthymian monasticism - Martyrius (478-486), Elias (494-516) and Elias' successor, John, who was the son of the priest Marcianus who had assisted Sabas in the building of the Monastery of the Cave.¹

The association with the Patriarchs of Jerusalem was a theme running through Sabas' life. He was swift to obey a summons from Sallustius who had received a complaint about Sabas' lack of education from some of the more intellectual monks and he accepted ordination in spite of previous reluctance.² We hear of him purchasing property in Jerusalem soon after the elevation of Elias, a decision in part motivated by a desire to be closer to the new Patriarch.³ He came to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Dedication of the Church of the Anastasis.⁴ He visited the Patriarch to enlist his support in the building of a new monastery.⁵ His friendship with Elias continued until the latter's death in exile at Aila, which took place during a visit from Sabas and Stephen, the superior of Euthymius' monastery.⁵ Within a few days Sabas was back in Jerusalem again.⁶ The powerful position held by Sabas at the capital is shown by his participation in diplomatic missions on behalf of the Patriarch and his insistence that the new Patriarch John should anathematise Severus while declaring his support for the Council of Chalcedon.⁷

1. 127.4-9; 150.8.

2. 104.12-18.

3. 116.8-24.

4. 121.14-16. For the Feast of Dedication or 'Encaenia', see E.D.Hunt, Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire (Oxford 1984) pp.108-110.

5. 123.22.

6. 161.2-162.3.

7. 162.3-4.

8. 139.20-27; 141.12-15; 173.4-9; 151.18-152.5.

Commentators have raised the question as to whether Sabas in fact played as prominent a part in these negotiations as Cyril suggests. Theodore of Petra does not mention Sabas' name in his account of the events of the Emperor Anastasius' reign, giving the credit to his hero Theodosius. F.Loofs considers that Leontius of Byzantium was the apocrisarius of Patriarch Peter in the mission to Constantinople and that Sabas was a subordinate member of the party.¹ Theodore's version of events can be accounted for by his interest in Theodosius.² Loofs' contention, even if correct, does not affect the significant point of Sabas' participation in the journey to the Imperial Court, which is that he went at all. Usually, monastic leaders stayed in their monasteries. Antony, for example, made only two brief visits to Alexandria - one in an attempt to achieve martyrdom and the other in order to support the Nicene faith.³ Pachomius kept in touch with the capital through the visits made by his monks but never undertook the journey himself.⁴ The descent of Daniel the Stylite from his column and his entry into Constantinople was an unprecedented event in response to an urgent crisis.⁵ Sabas' readiness to travel and his involvement in diplomacy stand in sharp contrast to the conventional style of monastic superior. He is an unusual phenomenon in ascetic literature.

Sabas' relationship with the Emperors was also harmonious. The interview between Sabas and Justinian paints an ideal portrait of the mutual respect and complementary responsibilities within the Empire of the Emperor and the Monk. First, Justinian's eyes are opened and he recognises the divine favour which surrounds Sabas.⁶ Then, instead of the customary proskynesis offered to the Emperor, Justinian reverses the roles and reverences Sabas (προσδραμὼν προσεκύνησεν αὐτῷ).⁷ The mutual tasks of the two are then explained.

1. F.Loofs, Leontius von Byzanz (Leipzig 1887) pp.261-273.

2. See above p.57-58.

3. VAnton 46; 69 (PG 26, 909B-C,941A).

4. VPach Bo¹ 89; 107.

5. VDanStyl 71.19-79.24.

6. The interview is described in 173.19-176.2.

7. 173.24.

It is Justinian's duty to ensure peace, prosperity and security for the Church, and to combat heresy. The monks, for their part, pray for the Emperor. The result of these two activities is that God will grant that the Empire is extended. The relationship between the two is summarised in the charming vignette of Sabas reciting the office of Terce while Justinian makes the arrangements for his requests to be granted. Each, says the saint to a companion who complains that Sabas is not showing proper respect to the Emperor, is at that moment doing his proper work (ἐκεῖνοι τὸ ἴδιον ποιοῦσιν. ποιῶμεν καὶ ἡμεῖς τὸ ἡμέτερον).¹

This ideal image was harder for Cyril to sustain in the case of Anastasius, whose support of the Monophysite heresy led him into conflict with the Patriarch of Jerusalem. On the occasion of Sabas' interviews with him during the saint's first visit to Constantinople, there is co-operation between the two men, as there was to be with Justinian. The divine favour resting on Sabas is revealed to Anastasius who sees an angelic form preceding the old man (ἀγγελικὴν τινὰ μορφήν).² In the three interviews, Sabas is given money for the monasteries but, as important, also receives an assurance that Elias and the Church in Jerusalem will not be further molested. Sabas addresses him with respect, offering proskynesis to the Emperor (ἔλθον προσκυνῆσαι τὰ ἴχνη τῆς ὑμετέρας εὐσεβείας).³

In other passages about Anastasius, Cyril's portrait is less favourable. He describes the attempts of the Emperor to "disrupt and overturn the constitution of the Church in Palestine".⁴ His account includes Elias' opposition to the depositions of Euphemius and Macedonius, the Synod of Sidon, and the return of peace to Jerusalem after the monks of the desert gave a massive display of their support for the Chalcedonian stand of the new Patriarch John.⁵

1. 178.16-17.

2. 142.18.

3. 142.27-143.1. 142.18-147.9 describes the interviews.

4. 139.25-27.

5. 139.20-141.23; 148.6-150.11; 150.11-158.11. For the relationship between Cyril's account and the parallel passages in Theodore Lector's Ecclesiastical History and Theophanes' Chronography, see MH, pp.60-67.

Cyril suggests two reasons for Anastasius' assaults on the Jerusalem Church. Either he has been misled by bad advisers, like Marinus who tried to persuade the Emperor not to grant the remission of taxes to Jerusalem on the grounds that it was a city of Nestorians and Jews.¹ Or he is moved by anger, a passion which as all monks knew should be attributed to demonic influence.² The anger of Anastasius provoked the anger of God, and God punished the Emperor with a thunderstorm in which he died.³ Neither of these explanations of Anastasius' behaviour require Cyril to abandon his cherished picture of the God-loving Emperor co-operating with the God-chosen monk.

There is no need to reject Cyril's account of Sabas' visit to Anastasius as unhistorical on the grounds that a friendly conversation between representatives of two opposed groups is intrinsically impossible.⁴ Cyril rightly describes Anastasius as a 'lover of monks' (*φιλομόναχος*).⁵ He is known to have been pious and was once proposed as a candidate for the Patriarchate of Antioch.⁶ His religious policies were pragmatic. For most of his reign he supported the Monophysite cause, but, after Vitalian's revolt in the Balkans in 515, he was prepared to uphold the Council of Chalcedon in order to gain the support of Rome.⁷ Political events are complex and the motives of the participants are mixed. Inconsistencies and contradictions are bound to be present if all events are forced into the framework of a pre-conceived notion of the 'God-loving Emperor'.⁸ The apparently contradictory elements of Cyril's account are accurate reflections of a period of complex ecclesiastical politics.

1. 142.20-21; 146.4-147.9. Marinus' opposition to Sabas came to a dramatic end when, in accordance with a prophecy of Sabas, he was killed in a fire in his house.
2. 139.27; 141.5; 141.17; 150.18.
3. 162.9.
4. As Schwartz does (*Kyriillos*, p.379) when he writes that this part of the *Life* "mischen sich Echtes und Verkehrtes in wunderliche Weise".
5. 142.20.
6. Theophanes, *Chron* (de Boor, p.135).
7. For Anastasius' religious policy, see P.Charanis, *Church and State in the Later Roman Empire* (Thessalonika 1974).
8. Compare the wildly differing views of Justinian in the works of Procopius. See Averil Cameron, *Procopius and the sixth century* (London 1985) pp.131-137.

The Emperor plays an important part in Cyril's view of Church and Empire. The emphasis of his account is very different in this respect from that of some of his contemporaries. Theodore of Petra devotes a lengthy passage to a description of the wickedness of the Emperor Anastasius and the fearless resistance of Theodosius. Even the gift of money to the monastery is interpreted as being a bribe to turn the saint aside from his orthodox witness.¹ He assumes that the natural relationship of monk and Emperor is one of opposition, while Cyril makes the contrary assumption of co-operation. John Moschus is also a stern critic of the actions of Emperors. He condemns Zeno as deserving of punishment for the wrongs done to a woman, although his charity counts in his favour and deflects the vengeance due to him.² Not only is Cyril more generous in his praise of the Emperor but also more extreme in his condemnation of the Emperor's enemies. The Arab leader, Mundhir III of Hira, attacked Palestine in 529. Cyril described him as "enraged with anger... he pillaged, captured myriads of Romans and...committed all sorts of crimes".³ The language does not refer to any specific event but shows that, in Cyril's view, an enemy of the Empire is by definition to be reviled.

The conflict between the monk and the Emperor which is a theme of, for example, the work of Theodore of Petra lies behind the argument of a recent study by F.Noonan.⁴ He argues that there was within the social structure of Palestinian monasticism an independent political consciousness which was at variance with the ideals of Byzantium. The hagiographers' conception of society formed, in effect, the basis of a political opposition, of which the centre was Jerusalem. He writes: "The significance of the hagiographers' political conception was this...(it) damaged the Christian-Imperial synthesis by denying the close communion of church and polity...(The monks).

1. Theodore of Petra, VThds 54.1-56.19.

2. John Moschus, Prat 175 (PG 87.3; 3014B).

3. 211.15-19. See also J.S.Trimingham, Christianity among the Arabs in pre-Islamic Times (London 1979) p.115.

4. F.Noonan, 'Political Thought in Byzantine Palestinian Hagiography' (dissertation, Chicago 1975).

tended to set themselves up as champions of a special and separate sovereignty with which the political powers had to deal".¹ Noonan is correct to emphasise the political implications of the growing monastic movement in Palestine, and also to point to the elements in the life of this society which gave it a distinctive character. His analysis of the writings of the hagiographers in terms of political philosophy brings out aspects of their consciousness which have been overlooked. But the suggestion of an opposition between monastery and court cannot be accepted, especially on the basis of the evidence provided by the writings of Cyril of Scythopolis.

A comparison of the lives of Euthymius and Sabas shows the development of the monasteries of the Judaeen desert from being isolated communities of ascetics into a unified and influential social institution. It was characterised by a growing integration into the life of the Church and the Empire. Sabas' achievement was to make the monasteries a part of the society, drawing strength from it and contributing to it. The monasteries belonged not just to the Judaeen desert, but to the Church and the Empire, to Jerusalem and Constantinople.

1. Noonan, 'Political Thought in Byzantine Political Hagiography', pp.97,146,

Chapter Six

THE PURPOSES OF GOD: MIRACLE

6:1. Miracle in hagiography.

Some of the events described by Cyril stretch our credibility. An example is the story of the silversmith, Romulus, who was robbed of a hundred pounds of silver (αργύρου λιτρῶν ἑκατόν), prays to St Theodore for assistance and has to wait five days for the saint to appear to him. The reason which Theodore gives for the delay is that he had been requested to escort the recently departed Sabas to his place of rest. In spite of Cyril's assurance to the reader that he heard the story from Romulus himself (οὗτος δέ μοι ὁ Ῥωμύλος διηγήσατο), the anecdote does not seem to belong to the realm of hard historical fact.¹

Critics who have been concerned to establish the authenticity of the events described have often deliberately overlooked these stories, relegating them to the realm of the legendary, a genre of literature reserved for the lower levels of society. Two motives have combined to produce this result. First, there was the desire of ecclesiastical circles to ensure that the reverence offered to the saints had a sound basis in history and did not depend on a compilation of apocryphal stories.² The most important representatives of this approach have been the Bollandists with their huge work of editing and evaluating a mass of texts.

The second motive is that of historians who have been concerned to extract the reliable pieces of information from those which do not have a proper historical foundation. An example of this method applied to Cyril is the work of Eduard Schwartz. His

1. 184.23-185.13.

2. For this approach, see H. Delehaye, The Legends of the Saints (London 1962) pp.86-89. Delehaye classifies the texts into three categories, the third of which is those stories which describe imaginary figures to whom no historical existence has been imputed. He defines legend as something based on historical fact but distorted by popular imagination.

study seeks to provide a historical framework within which Cyril's writings can be assessed. Little attention is given to the anecdotes and stories of ascetic achievement which make up a large part of the material. He distinguishes the portions of the Life of Euthymius which can be considered to be historically reliable; thereby implying that the rest is somehow of inferior worth.¹

Cyril, because of his attention to detail and his accuracy of reporting, is well suited to such an approach. Historians have singled out his work for special praise placing it in a category apart from most hagiography. E.Stein, for example, offers this judgement. "Le terme d'hagiographie désigne aujourd'hui à la fois une branche florissante de la science historique, et une espèce de littérature dont la plupart des produits correspondent à un niveau intellectuel très bas: la seconde a pour but d'édifier des lecteurs naïfs et crédules en leur racontant les vies des saints personnages ou censés tels avec force détails miraculeux et sans trop de souci de la vérité; la première consiste à détruire le fatras d'absurdités accumulées par l'autre en établissant l'histoire réelle des mêmes personnages. (Of the first type) nous ne croyons pas diminuer le mérite éclatant des Pères Jésuites qui forment la Société des Bollandistes, en disant qu'ils ont eu un modeste précurseur en la personne de Cyrille de Scythopolis".²

E.Patlagean is critical of this selective approach. "On se sent libre de manipuler les textes, d'arracher les renseignements concrets à une trame hagiographique qu'on néglige; on semble n'y voir que l'enchaînement en ordre variable d'un nombre limité de thèmes légendaires, parmi lesquels des auteurs à la fois véridiques et stupides auraient insérés des faits seuls dignes d'être retenus".³ She objects to the suggestion that hagiography is

1. Kyrrillos, p.373.

2. E.Stein, Histoire du Bas-Empire, Vol 2 (Paris,Brussels 1949) p.699.

3. E.Patlagean, 'Ancienne hagiographie byzantine et histoire sociale', Annales ESC 23(1968)106-126 (p.107).

addressed to the lower levels of society. "Oeuvre du groupe des moines, elle s'adresse à la société entière".¹ The works should be considered in their entirety. We will not succeed in understanding the society which produced and enjoyed this literature if we use modern criteria to judge them.²

If it is not anachronistic to speak of a philosophy of history with regard to Cyril, it is to be found in the first chapter of the Life of Euthymius. He begins with a statement about the Incarnation of Christ. The first words are: "The only-begotten Son, the Word of God...through his indescribable love for mankind, the good pleasure of the Father and the will of the Holy Spirit deigned for our salvation to become flesh and to be made man".³ Through this act, we are enabled to gain access to him (πρὸς αὐτὸν...ζῶσαν), and this possibility is mediated to the world through the preaching of the apostles, the combats of the martyrs and then the ascetic combats of the monks.⁴ Euthymius has a share in this succession of those who bring grace to humanity.⁵

In this way Cyril states at the start of his work that his purpose is to show how divine grace works through the life of the saint. The history that he writes is not the history of a human life, but the history of God working through a human life. The study of history, for Cyril, is the study of the 'gesta Dei per monachos'.⁶ Of this form of history, Flusin writes: "L'histoire a pour origine et pour objet le miracle, qui est dans cette perspective le véritable événement historique. Le miracle est en effet pour l'histoire sainte ce qu'est l'événement pour l'histoire

1. Patlagean, 'Ancienne hagiographie' (p.107).

2. Patlagean's method is derived from the structural analysis of the anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss, especially as presented in his Anthropologie Structurale (Paris 1958). It has been fruitfully developed by P.R.L. Brown in 'Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity', JRS 61(1971)80-101.

3. 6.22-7.2.

4. 7.14-8.2.

5. 8.7-10.

6. A phrase used by Flusin in MH, p.210.

profane: le fait ponctuel, que l'on peut aisément situer et qui sert donc de repère et de preuve acceptable pour tous, où apparaissent à nu les vraies forces qui guident le cours des choses".¹

Miracles are sometimes seen as an intrusion into a secular world governed by natural laws. In Cyril's understanding, miracles are indeed an intrusion but an intrusion which gives meaning to the world of his experience. They are the reference points by which the events which happen around him can be evaluated, understood and fitted into a coherent scheme. The pivotal place given to miracles is shown by the care with which Cyril reports that each turning-point in the lives of the saints is validated by the intervention of God, showing that its significance derives from his purpose.² These moments include the birth of the saints. Euthymius' conception takes place in response to the fervent prayer of his childless parents, and is accompanied by a divine promise that the child will strengthen the churches.³ Sabas is compared to Samuel on the grounds that he was consecrated to God from birth.⁴ Another important moment is the decision by the saint, taken after a period of solitary asceticism in the desert, to receive disciples and to found a monastery. This is accompanied by a divine voice guiding the saint. In the case of Euthymius, the command was to receive certain monks because God had sent them; and in that of Sabas, to settle in a certain cave as the first step towards the colonisation of the desert.⁵ The establishing of the monastery is achieved through miraculous acts of God: the multiplication of a meagre supply of bread, the discovery of a spring, and of a cave-church.⁶ The start of Sabas' missions to the Imperial Court are marked through a sign of God's favour, a vision given to the Emperor.⁷

1. MH, p.214.

2. "The significance of the extraordinary act cannot be determined from the action itself but from the framework of meaning within which it is placed", is the comment of H.C.Kee in Miracle in the Early Christian World (Yale 1983) p.148.

3. 8.23-9.9.

4. 87.5-6.

5. 25.25-26; 98.2-6. Pachomius' monasteries were also founded in obedience to a divine command. See VPach G¹ 12 (Athanassakis 16.4-5).

6. 27.5-28.8; 101.6-19; 101.20-102.7.

7. 142.17-18; 173.19-24.

The writing of Cyril itself is a part of this divine plan to manifest God's grace through the saints. His work of authorship is initiated by a commission addressed through the mouths of Euthymius and Sabas.¹ Far from being an unnecessary appendage to a work of sober history, the miracle stories tell of the means by which the history proceeds.

The conception of a miracle as something which is supernatural as opposed to natural is inappropriate here. This understanding of miracle is associated with the name of David Hume, who perceived a miracle as a violation of the laws of nature which required overwhelming evidence before it could be accepted, a weight of evidence which it is rarely possible to obtain for any historical event.² The origins of this understanding of the nature of miracle can be found in the Greek view of the world as an orderly physical structure. Harold Remus, in his study of miracles in the second century, describes how the ideas of God and nature were linked by Aristotle, and points to the frequent occurrence of the phrase 'law of nature' (*νόμος φύσεως*) in, for example, Philo of Alexandria. People were fascinated by miracles which were seen as the impact of the extraordinary on an ordinary world. The Semitic outlook of the Bible had little interest in science or natural law. Events, in the main strands of the Biblical tradition, were caused by personal initiative, rather than by a mechanical process of cause and effect. The world is a power structure with God at the top giving coherence and meaning to it. Miracles demonstrate the power of God and the character of God.³ The regularity of nature depends on God creating

1. 84.1-21.

2. Mary Hesse ('Miracles and the Laws of Nature' in Miracles ed C.F.D.Moule (London 1965) pp.39-40) points out the difficulties in understanding what natural laws are when applied to phenomena as complex as miracle stories. The more fundamental question is how acts of God can be distinguished at all in special or providential events as distinct from the ordinary course of nature. "The offence of particularity is still with us, whether these special acts violate or conform with the laws of nature. The fundamental problem is not about miracle but about transcendence" (p.42).

3. H.Remus, Pagan-Christian Conflict over Miracle in the Second Century (Cambridge, Mass. 1983) pp.48-50.

and sustaining it. "Ironically, 'sign' does not connote a violation of natural law, as miracle has been widely understood by man in the post-Enlightenment period, but quite the reverse: it was the establishment of order in what we might call both nature and history that was the sign of God's activity".¹

The miracles of the ascetics and holy men are works of power. They establish the creative, ordered power which is from God, in place of the chaotic power of the devils which threatened the life of the individual and the community. The power of the saint was a source of security and hope for anybody who felt threatened or confused.

As an event which is a sign of God's power and which gives meaning to human experience, a miracle is also a social phenomenon. For the miracle to be an effective mechanism by which God's power can be experienced, it has to be recognised and acknowledged. In her discussion of 'Miracles and the Laws of Nature' referred to above, Mary Hesse points out that miracles happen within groups of people, and that the workings of social groups and of the human psyche are inadequately understood. "Miracles which are religiously significant must be regarded as social phenomena of great complexity, and in the absence of any clear idea what 'laws of nature' would look like in this domain, it is impossible to know what a violation would look like either".² Her remarks point towards a more fruitful approach to the study of miracle. This is the function which the event plays within a social group.

The recognition of a miracle takes place within a group of people who share a framework of beliefs and values. The social dimension of miracle is shown by the use of language of 'magic' and 'miracle'. An event recognised by a group as a miracle can be

1. Kee, Miracle in the Early Christian World. p.150.

2. Hesse, 'Miracles and the Laws of Nature' (p.39).

dismissed as magic by someone outside it. Attempts to distinguish magic and miracle as intrinsically different phenomena have not been successful. It has been maintained, for example, that magic involves the manipulation of a deity while miracle is achieved through submission to it; or that magic is done by spells and miracle by prayers. But such distinctions themselves derive from prior judgements about the nature and value of the actions concerned. There is, in fact, little difference between a prayer and a spell insofar as both are forms of words which seek a result from a deity. Viewed sociologically, the charge of magic which pagans and Christians levelled at each other served as a form of social classifier that helped to distinguish between different groups of people from the perspective of the speaker but does not necessarily imply any essential difference in the actions of the participants.¹

H. Remus discusses the sociology of miracle, pointing out that knowledge, beliefs and values are part of the culture which is mediated through the society in which the individual lives. He describes the process of conversion as the way a person joins the group, an intensive socialization process by which a new form of knowledge is discovered and learned. He shows that miracle claims can function as a means by which a group defines itself, commends itself and wins converts. "Christianity's miracle stories...and its nihilations of other miracle claims functioned as a way to win converts and as a means of social legitimation within the larger pagan society. Within Christianity itself conflicts over miracle also had important social dimensions".²

The monasteries described by Cyril were struggling to establish themselves in an uninviting and sometimes hostile environment. They were claiming an influence and a significance within the Church. The divine favour shown by the miracles was a way of commending

1. Remus, Pagan Christian Conflict, p.72. For a discussion of the sociological implications of the terms magic and miracle, see pp.48-72.

2. Remus, Pagan Christian Conflict, p.80.

the new institution to contemporaries and of attracting new members. Among Euthymius' early disciples were the members of a Saracen tribe led by Aspabet.¹ Aspabet's son was afflicted by a devil and his father brought him to Euthymius to be cured. This involved a renunciation by the tribe of the medicine and religious practices which they had previously adhered to and which are now seen as magical. "I have been through all the skills of doctors and the vain operations of the magi (μαγικῆς περιεργίας)...Where are the fantasies of the magi?"² Euthymius healed the boy and the tribe was converted. They thus adopted a new culture, religion and way of life. This is made clear by the statement that after he had instructed them in the faith, Euthymius "dismissed them no longer Hagarenes and Ishmaelites, but as descendants of Sarah and inheritors of the promise, transferred by baptism from slavery to freedom".³ The Saracens settled near the monastery and one of their number was consecrated bishop. Their integration into Christian society was complete.

Miracle has a function not only in defining a society but also in its continuing operation. Among the miraculous powers which were of social value was the exorcism of devils. Recent studies, drawing on anthropological research among primitive peoples, have demonstrated that exorcism can be a social ritual action by which violence, conflict and tension can be identified and removed.⁴ The saint is the figure with power at his disposal which can handle the destructive elements within a community.

An example of a community turning to the holy man at a time of crisis is provided by a striking chapter of the Life of Euthymius. This describes a huge crowd from the drought-stricken city of Jerusalem and the villages around processing to Euthymius' monastery and chanting "Lord, have mercy". The saint points out that the

1. In fact a title, 'spahbedh' or commander of armies.

2. 19.21-22,28.

3. 21.8-10.

4. See Brown, 'Rise and Function of the Holy Man' (p.88).

drought is a form of divine correction of a sinful people but eventually agrees to pray for them. After his prayers the long-awaited autumn rain comes.¹ The power of the holy man was recognised as being effective in a wide variety of social needs.

The assessment of the miracle stories contributes to the understanding of the society which has transmitted them. Within this, it is their function which is significant. "It is vital to remember this when reading any part of this text (in fact the Historia Monachorum) - the question 'why', 'what for' is always predominant over the question 'how', 'what are the mechanics of this' in the mind of the ancient world".²

1. 38.1-39.9.

2. Benedicta Ward, Introduction to N. Russell, The Lives of the Desert Fathers (Oxford 1980) p.40.

6:2. Cyril's miracle stories.

To describe the body of material which contain the miracles worked by the monks, Cyril prefers the word θαῦμα, and the verbal equivalent θαυματουργέω. His choice of vocabulary shows that he presents these as events which are intended to provoke wonder or admiration, since θαῦμα has the meaning of 'wonder' or 'marvel'.

On only one occasion does he use the word σημεῖον or 'sign', which occurs in the context of miracles in much contemporary literature. He is referring to the death of Nonnus, the Origenist leader. This was a providential event which led to the fragmentation and disintegration of the Origenist party in Palestine and the triumph of the Orthodox. It was seen as a result of the direct intervention of God. ὁ Θεὸς μέγα σημεῖον πεποίηκεν.¹ On the basis of this single passage, it seems that, for Cyril, σημεῖον is an act of God without an intermediary, while θαῦμα is an event in the lives of the saints, achieved by them or for them.

Another available word was τέρας, an 'omen' or 'sign'. This word is not used by Cyril and its derivative, τεραστία, occurs only once. In this passage τεραστία appears alongside θαυματουργήσας in a section which was influenced by the Prologue to the Religious History of Theodoret, where τεράτα is also used alongside θαυματουργέω.²

Cyril's almost exclusive use of the word θαῦμα to describe the miraculous is surprising. The New Testament writers favour the words σημεῖον or δύναμις.³ The word θαῦμα is almost entirely absent and θαυματουργέω is never used.⁴ Related words occur on occasions. For example θαυμαστός is used once to mean 'wonderful work', although θαυμάσας appears several times.⁵

1. 195.26.

2. 23.15, and Theodoret, HRel Prologue 10.11 (SC Vol 1, p.140).

3. See Moule, in Miracle, pp.235-238.

4. The one occurrence is in Revelation 17.6, where it means 'admiration'.

5. Matthew 21.15 for θαυμαστόν, and Matthew 21.42 for an example of θαυμάσας.

Monastic writers also employed a variety of words for miracle. The authors of the Historia Monachorum, for example, used δύναμις, σημεῖον and θαῦμα (with the Latin equivalents, virtus, signum and prodigium).¹ Theodoret's vocabulary is more limited. σημεῖον only occurs three times - twice in the phrase 'sign of the cross' and once in the phrase 'signs of health'.² The words δύναμις and θαῦμα are both used extensively.

The reason why Cyril restricts himself almost exclusively to the word θαῦμα is not immediately apparent. Perhaps it is the result of his early experiences in the monastery of Euthymius when he personally witnessed several miracles taking place at the saint's grave. He started at that point to make enquiries about the life of Euthymius and he recorded the events so as to evoke in others the admiration and wonder which he himself experienced. He wrote: τὰ γὰρ νῦν ἐπ' ὄψεσιν πάντων ἐκ τῆς αὐτοῦ θήκης προερχόμενα θαῦματα οὐ μόνον ἄξιοθαύμαστα τυγχάνει, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἄξιονημομεντα.³ The powerful emotions then experienced formed his determination to write and influenced the style and vocabulary of his writings.

Cyril uses the word θαῦμα to refer to a wide range of events and actions. Euthymius casts a devil out of a boy and "the miracle was reported" (τοῦ δὲ θαύματος διαφημισθέντος).⁴ The subjection of both wild beasts and devils in the wilderness by the saint was achieved by God working wonderfully (θαυματουργήσας).⁵ The multiplication of loaves for visiting Armenians was a miracle (θαύματος) after which the laura began to be blessed.⁶ Other events described as θαύματα were the clairvoyant gift by which Euthymius foresaw that Anastasius would become Patriarch of Jerusalem; the variety of miracles worked by the departed Euthymius and Sabas for those who came with petitions to the grave; the savage lions becoming docile after a prayer for

1. For the vocabulary of the Historia Monachorum see B.Ward, in Lives of the Desert Fathers, p.39.

2. Theodoret, HRel 1.5.2; 9.7.16; 9.14.22. (SC Vol 1, pp.168, 420,432).

3. 71.7-9.

4. 22.19.

5. 23.14.

6. 28.9.

Sabas' help; and the healing of a sick man.¹ These examples of the many uses of the word *θαῦμα* show the kinds of events which he considered to be signs of the power of God working through the holy men.

This collection of events described as miraculous leaves us in no doubt that Cyril sees the presence and power of God as continually accompanying the fathers of the desert. God is active; but in what kinds of situations? To understand how and where God is seen as intervening requires that the variety of miracle stories should be classified. A suitable system of classification is not easy to devise and might seem inappropriate. There is, after all, no intrinsic connection between one miracle and another. They are not like members of a family, connected by descent; or artifacts devised according to a common pattern to meet general needs. On the contrary, by their nature miracles are unique and unrepeatable. They describe the action of God in response to a specific set of circumstances. But each situation, as well as being distinctive, also exhibits features which can be compared to other events of a similar kind. These can be the basis of a system of classification.

A number of possible systems could be adopted. Some of these are discussed by C.F.D.Moule.² He suggests several possible criteria. Stories could be classified according to whether they are directed towards persons or inanimate objects; or whether the account appears to be credulous or sceptical of the miraculous power displayed; or how the stories are distributed over different parts of the material; or according to the theological content which demonstrates the nature of God. For the purposes of this discussion it is the perception of the author and his public which is of interest. What were the situations in which God could be expected to show his power? What parts of human experience can be offered for healing and guidance and support? The miracle stories offer answers to these kinds of questions.

1. 35.17; 71.7-9; 119.28; 136.19.

2. Miracles, ed Moule, pp.239-243.

Benedicta Ward uses five categories in her analysis of the miracle stories in the Historia Monachorum. These are miracles of clairvoyance; dreams and visions; healings; nature miracles; and judgements.¹ P.Canivet uses similar groups in his discussion of the Religious History, except that he includes miracles of clairvoyance with dreams and visions; and distinguishes exorcisms from healings.² In the list below I have used the system of classification proposed by Benedicta Ward.

The following table not only divides Cyril's miracles into categories, but also provides comparative figures from three other sources. These are the Life of Antony, a work known and used extensively by Cyril; the Historia Monachorum, which describes the monasticism of Egypt and which contains a strong element of the miraculous; the Religious History, the main source for Syrian monasticism; and the Spiritual Meadow of John Moschus, another Palestinian source. The list does not claim to be more than approximate and it is the result of personal judgement whether an event is to be considered to be miraculous. References are not given. Although a rough and ready guide, the chart indicates that miracle plays a different function in the writing of Cyril from other comparable sources.

	Cyril	<u>Life of</u> <u>Antony</u>	<u>Historia</u> <u>Monach.</u>	<u>Religious</u> <u>History</u>	<u>Spiritual</u> <u>Meadow</u>
Clairvoyance	18	3	8	1	5
Dreams and Visions	27	1	11	5	4
Healings	21	6	18	23	33
Nature Miracles	32	2	23	12	0
Judgements	6	0	2	7	0
Total	94	12	62	47	58

1. Ward, Lives of the Desert Fathers, p.40.

2. P.Canivet, Le monachisme syrien selon Théodoret de Cyr, Théologie Historique 42 (Paris 1977) pp.120-144; and, with A.Adnès, 'Guérisons miraculeuses et exorcismes dans l'Histoire Philothée de Théodoret de Cyr', RHR 171(1967)53-82,149-179 (pp.60-67,149-172).

This shows that there are more miracle stories in Cyril's Lives than in other comparable sources, although it must be noted that the Historia Monachorum is a substantially shorter work. This is the result of the age in which he lived rather than a personal predilection for the extraordinary. Writing from the third century shows that miracles were passing out of fashion and were ceasing to be a part of the churches' experience.¹ But this decline in miracles was short-lived. By the end of the fourth century, they were rapidly coming back into prominence. This change in interest and expectation is shown most vividly by the contrast between the earlier and the later writings of St Augustine. In the earlier writings, he considers that the great miracles of the incarnation, resurrection and ascension still have an effect on the lives of believers, but that healings and exorcisms belong to the life-time of Christ and have ceased to occur. By the end of his life he had changed his views. His later books, for example the City of God Book XII, emphasise the necessity of miracles as a support to faith.²

This growing interest in miracles is reflected in the comparison of Eastern monastic sources. The earliest text here considered is the Life of Antony, written shortly after the death of Antony in 356. It is also the most restrained in its treatment of the miraculous. Not only are miracles few in number, but they are presented as the result of prayer and faith rather than of a special power residing in the holy man. This point is made by Antony when a soldier called Martinianus asks the saint to heal his daughter. Antony does not admit him but shouts down: "Why do you cry out to me, man? I, too, am a man like you, but if you believe in Christ, whom I serve, go, and in the same way you believe, pray to God and it will come to pass".³ Events which in Cyril appear

1. For the decline in miracles in this period, with illustration from Origen, Tertullian and Eusebius, see G.W.H.Lampe, 'Miracles and Early Christian Apologetic', and M.F.Wiles, 'Miracles in the Early Church', both in Miracles, ed Moule, pp.203-234.
2. See Joan Petersen, The Dialogues of Gregory the Great in their late Antique Cultural Background (Toronto 1984) pp.91-94.
3. VAnton 48 (PG 26, 913A).

as miracles are presented as entirely normal events by Athanasius. The provision of food by local people is the subject of a group of miracles in Cyril's writing but is treated in a more prosaic fashion in the earlier work. "The Saracens themselves...would make it a point to travel that way and would joyfully bring loaves to him".¹ On one occasion, Athanasius perceives the hand of God behind a visit of a friend bringing food, but this is because he comes when he is needed to revive Antony after a particularly exhausting struggle with the demons, not because of the need of the saint for the nourishment being provided.²

Theodoret wrote his Religious History in the early fifth century. In his book, miracles are more frequent, especially miracles of healing, but still they play a minor part in the narrative. Of seventy ascetics described by Theodoret, only twenty perform miracles, and, of these, only seventeen are the subject of specific stories. The other three ascetics are said to have performed healings, but no examples are given. Miracles are associated with solitary ascetics rather than with the founders of monasteries. Of the twelve monastic founders, only two performed miracles. Among the factors which caused Theodoret to be hesitant about the inclusion of miracles is his opposition to the Messalians. This probably accounts for the almost total absence of dreams and visions in the Religious History.³ Elsewhere, Theodoret says that the Messalians were famous for their dreams and illusions (*φαντασίαι*) which they falsely imagine to be prophecies.⁴ The Religious History contains several dramatic miracle stories, including the awe-inspiring cursings of the flippant washerwomen and the unjust judge, but the vast majority of the subjects of his book do no miracle.⁵ The overall impression is one of restraint in the presentation of miracles.⁶

1. VAnton 50 (PG 26, 916B).

2. VAnton 8 (PG 26, 853C).

3. Only Symeon Stylites receives a revelation in a dream. See Theodoret, HRel 26.3.9-16 (SC Vol 2, pp.162-164).

4. Theodoret, HE 4.11.4-12 (GCS pp.229-231).

5. Theodoret, HRel 1.4-6 (SC Vol 1, pp.166-172).

6. For the content of this paragraph see the works of Canivet and Adnès cited above on p. 193, note 2.

The Historia Monachorum was written at approximately the same time. It was the work of a monk from the Mount of Olives, whom Sozomen identifies with Timothy, an archdeacon who was in Alexandria in 412.¹ This author enjoyed miracle stories, and his work contains many accounts of the extraordinary. D.J.Chitty writes of him: "The work is full of wonders and the writer was extremely gullible".² In this characteristic he was, perhaps, ahead of his time, as miracle stories were to come to play an increasingly important part in ascetic writing.

As well as becoming more numerous, miracle stories were also becoming more dramatic. By 620, when John Moschus collected the stories which made up the Spiritual Meadow, miracle stories were frequent, extravagant and often bizarre.³ There is the story of a young man who was converted to a life of penitence by a corpse which awoke from the dead to rebuke him as he was in the course of robbing its grave; and the new-born baby who saved a monk from the suspicion of having been its father by pointing its finger at the true parent.⁴ By this time the popular taste for miracles was firmly established.

Comparison of the different traditions which contributed to the Lives of Cyril show the growth in popular enthusiasm for the miraculous. Among the variety of sources used, a useful distinction can be drawn between the oral tradition of the desert, mediated through the monks visited by Cyril, and the stories which originated in Cyril's life-time. The first group of stories date from before 525, and the second from the years 525 to 555.

To the first source belong the series of miracles by which life in the desert is sustained and the examples of clairvoyance

1. Sozomen, HE 6.29.2 (GCS. 279.1).

2. D.J.Chitty, The Desert a City (Oxford 1966) p.51.

3. See H.Chadwick, 'John Moschus and his friend Sophronius the Sophist', JThS NS 25(1974)41-74 (pp.69-72).

4. John Moschus, Prat 78,114 (PG 87.3, 2932D-2936C, 2977D-2980A).

which reveal to the saint the inner thoughts of the monks and their future careers while from the life-time of Cyril come most of the healing miracles, including those performed at the tombs of the saints. The posthumous miracles are the most far-fetched. They describe a thief who is prevented from reclaiming the goods he has stolen by a large serpent which blocks his path; and the camel driver who calls on Sabas for help for his camel which has fallen into a ravine and sees the old man riding the camel to safety.¹ A miracle remembered at Scythopolis has Sabas approach a woman, whose internal bleeding causes her to smell so badly that no-one can bear to approach her, and heal her by asking her to place his hand upon the diseased part of her body. This story is told with dramatic touches of detail and with reminiscences of Biblical acts of healing.² Cyril takes care to emphasise the authenticity of the more extraordinary miracles by explaining who is his source for them.³ These dramatic stories from Cyril's life-time are in contrast to the miracles of the earlier oral desert tradition which see God at work in the ordinary, day to day events of life in the monasteries.

Of the five categories of miracle stories, that of 'nature' miracles is most numerous in the writing of Cyril. These miracles deal with the material world rather than with human beings, although people benefit from them. With three exceptions, there is a common theme running through these miracles.⁴ They demonstrate how the monk can trust in God to supply what is necessary for life in the inhospitable desert. This was a prominent feature of the teaching of both Euthymius and Sabas. Sabas did not provide his monasteries with a regular income (τὴν πρόνοιαν πρόσδοσιν) but insisted that the monks should rely on God at all times, especially in famine or drought. This confidence was not misplaced. "God supplied every need bountifully,

1. 69.25-70.20; 186.15-187.3.

2. 163.23-164.10. Compare Acts 3.6; Luke 8.44.

3. 164.9-10; 185.1-12.

4. The exceptions are 136.20-137.21 (changing vinegar into wine); 220.11-221.17 (a fig-tree growing on rock); 242.24-243.6 (a wooden cross preventing the advance of a tidal wave).

so that there was more need among those who counted on their own riches and revenues than among the monasteries he cared for".¹ This passage is a comment on the series of miracles which show this divine providence in action.

Some of these miracles describe the provision of water. This could take place in several ways. Springs and pools of water were miraculously shown to the monks when they were in need of them. This happened following a time of prayer. On a Lenten wandering through the desert, the young Sabas collapsed from lack of water, but Euthymius prayed, then dug for water, and found it.² The spring at the Great Laura was shown to Sabas during prayer by night.³ On another occasion a refreshing cloud of dew enfolded a monk suffering from thirst during a journey across the desert.⁴ Frequently rain fell after prayer. The rainfall could be local to benefit only the community for which the prayer was offered or could be a more extensive fall of rain over a wider area.⁵

It has already been noted that the civic authorities were expected to provide a public water supply and that this facility was of especial importance in the arid desert regions in which the monasteries were founded.⁶ The miracles through which water was provided constitute a demonstration of the authority of the holy man within the monastic society. During a prolonged drought in Jerusalem the provision of water became urgent. The Patriarch organised an extensive programme of ditch-digging in the hope of discovering water - but with no success. In desperation he asked Sabas for help and, after the old man had prayed, a huge downpour resulted (which took place on 4th September, an unusually early date for the start of the autumn rains). So violent was the rainfall that

1. 159.2-23.

2. 57.1-11; also 94.23-95.2.

3. 101.6-13.

4. 109.20-28.

5. 167.4-24 for a local effect; 38.1-39.17 and 167.25-169.25 for widespread rain.

6. See above pp.115-118,162-163.

all the tools of the Patriarch's workmen were washed away.¹ This episode demonstrates the effectiveness of the power of Sabas and the corresponding weakness of the Patriarch. The two sources of authority co-operated, with the ascetic power of the old man exercised in response to the request of the Patriarch, but we, and the citizens of Jerusalem, are left in no doubt as to the location of true authority.

B.Flusin argues that the power to work miracles is a function of the position held with the monastic hierarchy. "Le cercle des bénéficiaires de leurs miracles coïncide strictement avec leurs attributions institutionnelles: Cyriaque, simple anachorète, fait pleuvoir sur sa cellule; Sabas, comme abbé, remplit les cisternes d'un de ses monastères dans le besoin; comme archimandrite, il fait pleuvoir sur Jérusalem; et Euthyme, qui le préfigure, sur la Palestine".² Flusin is correct to point to the institutional context in which miracles are worked but seeks to relate the miracles too closely to the position in the hierarchy. At the time of his rain miracle, Euthymius did not hold authority over Jerusalem. Sabas' two miracles took place during the same period, when his position as archimandrite was well established, and so the more extensive rain miracle was not the sign of an ecclesiastical promotion. Cyril's purpose is to show that the power to save is effective in a variety of situations, and that local people can find in the saint a sure source of support.

A group of miracles closely related to those concerned with water are the mighty acts which provide food. These also describe the means by which the monks receive the necessities of life. Of the five miracles which come into this category, only one describes an event which could be called paranormal. This is the occasion when the storehouse of Euthymius' monastery is miraculously filled, the purpose of which is to strengthen the commitment to hospitality.³ Similar events

1. 168.4-24.

2. MH, p.199. He refers to 232.19-233.3; 167.4-24; 167.25-169.24; 38.1-39.17.

3. 27.5-28.8.

also presenting the lesson of providing hospitality, are recorded in the Life of Theodosius.¹ Flusin considers these miracles to be equivalent to the rain miracles in Cyril, providing a claim to authority similar to that attributed to Sabas. "L'institution rivale des fondations Sabaïtes, le cénobion de Théodose, secrète une hagiographie qui revendique en des termes équivalents le même pouvoir".²

The four other feeding miracles describe situations which were normal in the Judaeian desert - the arrival of benefactors with gifts of food.³ The miracle is recognised in the opportune timing of the event, which takes place at the precise moment when the need is greatest. The miracle teaches the monk that he can trust in the providence of God.⁴ Other themes are introduced in a more complex feeding miracle from the Life of Sabas. Here food is brought to hte saint by Saracens from a neighbouring village, who had earlier been fed by Sabas from his meagre ration of plants at a time when they were in desperate staits from hunger. Sabas reflected to himself that these gifts were offered by those who were normally perceived as a threat to the security of the monks. The theme of hospitality blends with the theme of the power of the saint taming the forces of evil.⁵

Seven miracles describe how wild lions became tame in response to the authority of the saint. The presence of lions in the Lives is a reflection of the nature of the dangers encountered in the Palestinian desert. The occasions when the monks set off into the more remote areas of the desert in search of greater solitude would

1. Theodore of Petra, VThds 36.15-38.10; 72.12-76.16. The second of these miracles is also contained in certain manuscripts of the Spiritual Meadow. See L.Clugnet, 'Vies et récits d'anachorètes', ROC 10(1905)39-50 (pp.49-50).
2. MH, p.205.
3. Compare Theodore of Petra, VThds 28.8-20. Here the horse carrying the provisions refuses to travel beyond Theodosius' monastery, indicating to the owner that this is the place which should receive the gift.
4. 96.12-14; 160.2-7; 211.1-4; 227.18-22.
5. 96.12-18. Compare VAnton 8 (PG 26, 853C).

bring them into closer contact with the wild beasts of the desert. The caves offered shelter to both the saint and to the lion - and the unfortunate lion usually had to surrender his dwelling. The deep wadis with their streams and vegetation also attracted both the monk and the lion. Lions are the subject of several stories in the other main source for Palestinian monastic life, the Spiritual Meadow. John Moschus includes six anecdotes about lions, among which is the popular story of Gerasimus' lion, which resembles an occasion in the Life of Sabas when the saint removed a thorn from a lion's foot and entrusted an ass to its care.¹

Other environments produced different dangers. The equivalent stories in Egyptian literature describe the monk's power over crocodiles, hippopotamuses, hyenas and asps.² In Syria, the monks are troubled by dragons, which were probably venomous snakes, although Symeon the Old is reported to have tamed a lion.³

The presence of the stories about lions indicated the continuity between the martyrs and the monks, which Cyril points out in the Prologue to the Life of Euthymius.⁴ The idea that the monastic life was a form of martyrdom is common in the texts. Antony, for example, hoped to die during Maximin's persecution in 311-313. He went to Alexandria with that intention, but was unsuccessful in his attempt. He returned to his cell and there discovered an alternative form of martyrdom, a witness to the total demand of the love of Christ. He was "daily being martyred by his conscience, and doing battle in the combats of the faith".⁵ The submission of the lions to the monk

1. John Moschus, Prat 107 (PG 87.3, 2965C-2969B). Compare 138.19-139.13.
2. For crocodiles, VAnton 15 (PG 26, 865C); HMon 12.6-9 (SHG pp.94-95). For hippopotamuses, HMon 4.3 (SHG p.53). For hyenas, Palladius, HLaus 18.27-28 (Butler 57.4-58.2). For asps, Palladius, HLaus 2.4; 8.10 (Butler 18.2-11; 51.5-9).
3. For dragons, Theodoret, HRel 2.6.15; 3.7.2 (SC vol 1, pp.208,256). Canivet (in Monachisme Syrien, p.209) says that the dragon is "un animal qui symbolise les forces du mal". For Symeon and the lion, HRel 6.2.19-24 (SC Vol 1, pp.348-350).
4. 7.28-8.2.
5. VAnton 47 (PG 26, 912B). For further discussion of this theme, see E.Malone, 'The Monk and the Martyr', StAns 38(1956)201-228.

reminded the readers of how martyrs had had similar powers over the animals which were intended to kill them. Cyril's source for this theme was the Life of Thecla. His reference to martyrs in the Prologue to the Life of Euthymius was derived from this work.¹ Several stories about lions occur in the Life of Thecla. On one occasion "the fiercest of lions, denying his natural instincts" attached itself to Thecla and caressed her.² Another lion story contains the phrase: "παρὰ τῶν τὰ θηρία διεγερόντων ἐκ τῆς των μαστίγων πληγῆς καὶ ἥχης".³ This idea lies behind the thought, borrowed immediately from the Life of Antony, which is used twice by Cyril in his stories about lions.⁴ On one occasion, lions are chased away by the prayers of Sabas "ὥς ὑπὸ μάστιγος διωκόμενος".⁴ The connection with the Life of Thecla shows that the origin of this striking phrase lies in accounts of martyrdom.

Stories which show the saint's power over lions are placed after those describing his solitary life in the desert. This important phase in the ministry of both Euthymius and Sabas took place before they founded their monasteries. Through their ascetic struggles and their trust in God, they obtained victory over the devils. In the case of Sabas, the devil's final attack in this stage of the conflict was in the form of a lion. Satan appeared "ἐν ὁμοιώματι λέοντος φοβητάτω". After Sabas reminded it of the superior power of God "immediately the beast became invisible".⁵ The power over wild beasts is associated with that over devils. "The God who worked such wonders subjected to the God-bearing Euthymius not only the perceptible (τὰ αἰσθητά) but also the intellectual (τὰ νοητά) wild beasts, I mean the spiritual powers of evil".⁶ Similarly, "God subjected to him (Sabas)

1. 7.28-8.2. Compare VThecl 1.9-10 (SHG p.172).

2. VThecl 16.26-32 (SHG pp.234-236).

3. VThecl 19.3 (SHG p.244).

4. 107.15. Compare 215.19-20; VAnton 52 (PG 26, 920A).

5. 96.2; 98.8-9. Compare: "The devil was prowling round like a lion seeking some opportunity for attack...The place was filled with the appearances of lions, bears...The lion roared wanting to spring at him" VAnton 7;9 (PG 26, 852A;853B;857A).

6. 23.14-16; 96.9-10. The passions of the soul are referred to as wild beasts by Theodoret - "ἀλλὰ τὰ ἄγρια τῆς ψυχῆς...θηρία" HRel 10.2.12-13 (SC Vol 1, p.438).

every venomous and man-eating beast".¹ John Moschus compares this state of the monk with that of Adam in Paradise. "All this took place not because it was necessary to attribute to the lion a reasonable soul, but because God wished to glorify those who glorify him...and to show how the beasts were subjected to Adam before he had transgressed the commandment and was chased out of Paradise".² To the spiritual recovery of Paradise through obedience corresponds the practical achievement of mastering the threats encountered in the desert. The monk's ascetic struggles convert the desert into a place where God is encountered.³

The desert was an arena in which the combat between the monk and the forces of evil took place.⁴ But the presence of devils was not confined to desert places. The men and women of Late Antiquity had a vivid sense of an impending force of evil which threatened their physical and spiritual well-being. "The sharp sense of an invisible battle hung over the religious and intellectual life of late Antique man. To sin was no longer merely to err: it was to allow oneself to be overcome by unseen forces".⁵

The power of evil was a factor present in a wide range of human experiences. Human enemies of the saint could be interpreted as the devil in human form.⁶ Writing about the Life of Martin, J. Fontaine describes the interpenetration of the material world by the spiritual forces of evil with which the monk had to contend. "Le lecteur a le sentiment d'être à l'intersection d'une expérience religieuse et d'une expérience sensible, comme si le monde martinien prenait une double existence, à la fois objective et subjective, visible et invisible".⁷

1. 96.9-10,

2. John Moschus, Prat 107 (PG 87.3, 2969A-B).

3. The paradigm of saint's struggle against devils is that of Antony in VAnton 5-6,9-10 (PG 26, 848A-849D, 856B-860B).

4. For the desert as the home of devils, see MO 1, p.31; A. Guillaumont, Aux origines du monachisme chrétien, Spiritualité Orientale 30 (Bégrolles en Mauge 1979) p.70.

5. P.R.L. Brown, The World of Late Antiquity (London 1971) p.53.

6. For example Eusebius calls Marcian "the first-born of Satan" in HE 4.14.7 (SC Vol 2, p.180).

7. J. Fontaine, Sulpice Sévère, Vie de St Martin SC 133 (Paris 1967) p.161.

The life of the monk provided a demonstration of the power from God which put to flight the forces of evil, thereby also restoring persons to health of body, mind and spirit. "The Christian missionaries advanced principally by revealing the bankruptcy of men's invisible enemies, the demons, through exorcisms and miracles of healing".¹

The victory over the powers of evil is played out in a substantial collection of miracles described in Cyril's Lives. Flusin proposes a distinction within this category between 'reflexive' miracles ("miracles réflexifs") which benefit the saint, as when Sabas overcame the devils and from then on received power over the beasts, and 'transitive' miracles ("miracles transitifs") which benefit somebody else.² This contrast would not have appealed to Cyril. It is the holy man's intention to defeat evil wherever it is to be found. That purpose is worthwhile in itself, regardless of the benefit brought to any given individual.

The methods used are the same whether it is a person or a place being exorcised. The cleansing of the hill of Castellion from demonic occupation contains details which are familiar from accounts of the exorcism of persons. Firstly, the hill inspired Sabas with fear. "This hill was frightening because of the crowd of devils living there... Sabas wanted to go away because of the fear he felt as a man".³ Fear was a common feeling aroused by the terrifying presence of the devils. Secondly, Sabas responded to the presence of the demons with prayer: "Through ceaseless prayers and divine praises the place was tamed". Exorcisms of persons were also achieved through prayer.⁴ Thirdly, in addition to praying, Sabas sprinkled the place with the oil from the Holy Cross, and he took courage from the power of the Cross, a method also used on possessed persons.⁵ And, fourthly, the devils only retired after much shouting and commotion. "They went out crying with a human

1. Brown, World of Late Antiquity, p.55. Here he also offers the charming image of the monks who "treated the demons with the delighted alarm of small boys visiting a lion at the zoo".
2. MH, p.197.
3. 110.7-8,15.
4. 110.12-13. Compare 22.22; 76.18-20; 218.6.
5. 110.11,17. Compare 20.23; 164.15-18; 218.7.

voice and saying, 'What power comes from you, Sabas, is it not enough that you have made the ravine into a city but you must also come up to our place?' ".¹ The shouting of devils is another feature common in exorcisms. For example, a stranger is brought to Euthymius' tomb and the devil cries out: "What have you and I to do with each other, O slave of God Euthymius? Where are you taking me? I am not coming out".² Devils receive the same treatment from the saints wherever they are found and whoever is going to benefit from their removal.

The features of stories of exorcism are dramatically collected together in a story from the Life of Theodore of Sykeon. It describes the arrival of Theodore in a village. "When Theodore drew nigh to the village, the spirits which were afflicting men felt his presence and met him, howling out these words. 'O violence! Why have you come here, you iron-eater...there was no need for you to cross the frontier. We know why you have come but we shall not obey you'. When he rebuked them they at once held their peace...But one very wicked spirit which was in a woman resisted and would not come out. Then the saint caught hold of the woman's hair and shook her violently and rebuked the spirit by the sign of the Cross and by prayer to God...Through the grace of God, (the spirits) were all collected, and to some who saw them, they looked like flying bluebottles or hares or dormice...From that time on the place and the inhabitants of the village and the neighbourhood remained safe from harm".³ This exorcism is effective simultaneously for both the people and the place.

Victory over devils and the healing of sickness was not achieved by prayer alone. Holy objects played an important part in the process. Peter Brown raises the question of where power is to be found. "Much of the contrasting developments of Western Europe and Byzantium in the Middle Ages can be summed up as a prolonged debate on the precise locus of spiritual power...In Byzantium, the locus of spiritual power wavered as paradoxically as did the fluid society in which it was exercised".⁴ In Palestine, this question received an

1. 110.26-111.1.

2. 77.17-18.

3. Life of Theodore of Sykeon 43 (Festugière, p.40-42).

4. Brown, 'Rise and Function of the Holy Man' (p.95).

easy answer. There was a solid and very visible place which contained within it the power of God. Or rather, places - for at the centre of Christian Palestinian devotion were the Holy Places where Christ had lived, died and risen again. The power of the Holy Places was so real and tangible that it could be parcelled up and taken away. This power is testified to by miracles. It drew the pilgrims to Jerusalem, and, no doubt, had developed to satisfy their demand. "In the place where the Lord's body was laid, at its head, has been placed a bronze lamp. It burns there day and night, and we took a blessing from it, and then put it back. Earth is brought up to the tomb and put inside, and those who go in take some as a blessing". The Piacenza pilgrim, a near-contemporary of Cyril, was among those who were proud to receive the power of God in the form of oil or earth which had been in contact with the Holy Places. Most potent of all was the oil taken from the lamps which burn at the Holy Sepulchre. "They offer oil to be blessed in little flasks. When the mouth of one of these little flasks touches the wood of the cross, the oil instantly bubbles over, and unless it is closed very quickly, it spills out".¹ Such oil from the Sepulchre was frequently used by Sabas in his struggles against the demons.² The sign of the cross was also effective against evil.³

Relics were another means by which holiness could be encountered. Their availability gave an encouragement to the development of popular enthusiasm for miracles. The discovery of the bodies of Gervasius and Protasius at Milan, of Vitalis and Agricola at Bologna, and Nazarinus also at Milan have been described as a turning-point in the attitude of the Western Church to miracles.⁴ Relics had been common in the Holy Land for a longer period and so the climate was

1. Antoninus Placentinus 18,20 (CCL pp.138-139). Collections of these little flasks or 'ampullae' dating from the time of Cyril have been found at Bobbio and Monza. See E.D.Hunt, Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire (Oxford 1984) pp.130-131.

2. 110.11; 136.16-17; 164.15. For a similar miracle, see Life of Peter the Iberian 29-39 (Raabe, pp.34-35).

3. 20.22-23; 171.4-5.

4. See Joan Petersen, Dialogues of Gregory the Great, p.58.

favourable for the development of the tombs of Euthymius and Sabas as places of healing and exorcism. The cure was effected through physical contact with objects imbued with the saint's holiness. The sick person could be laid on the tomb or, alternatively, anointed with oil from it.¹ On one occasion, a desperate sufferer drank the oil from the tomb.² The death of the holy man did not prevent him being a source of healing power. If anything, his power was more efficacious than during his life because people knew where to go to find it.

The miracles of clairvoyance and the dreams and visions can be considered together. Both showed that the fathers could perceive the purposes of God in the events which took place in the monasteries and in society at large. Clairvoyance was a gift acquired after long practice of the ascetical life.³ Through his spiritual vision, the saint became aware of the present state of the individual's soul. "Euthymius, enlightened by God, received the grace of seeing the movements of the soul with the vision of the physical body, and he knew which temptations each wrestled with, which he overcame and by which he was overcome".⁴ He could also see into the future, knowing who would advance to high office in the church and when his own death, and the death of others, would take place.⁵ Sabas exercised the gift of clairvoyance in his diplomatic missions. He foresaw that those who opposed him would come to an untimely end and that God would prosper the military campaigns of Justinian.⁶ These outcomes are presented as the divinely ordained consequence of the actions of the people concerned and so, since they are the result of God's action, should be seen as examples of the saint's clairvoyance rather than as miracles of punishment which he works on his enemies.

1. For lying on the tomb, see 75.24-25; 76.10. Flusin, in MH pp.180-181, suggests that the haemorrhoid woman at Scythopolis was also hoping to be cured by this process of incubation. For anointing with oil, see 68.14-15; 76.2.
2. 76.20-21.
3. 99.6-7.
4. 45.28-46.3.
5. For advancement in office, 33.22-28; 35.3-25. For foretelling death, 57.12-14; 58.22-23.
6. 146.11-18; 163.8-13; 175.19-176.2.

The use of this charismatic gift in the regular day-to-day management of the affairs of the monastery and in discussions about the conduct of the Empire point to a recurring theme in Cyril's view of history. There is an intimate connection between the development of the monastic life of the Palestinian desert and the well-being of the Church and Empire. Through the employment of the power of clairvoyance, the saint shows that God is at work in both processes, that he is revealing the future course of events to his saints and that he is working through them to lead the church to peace.

A category of miracle which is absent from the writings of Cyril is that of the controversial miracle. This is a miraculous event which demonstrates clearly the truth of a certain doctrinal position. It is a form of miracle which is frequent in the Spiritual Meadow. For example, John Moschus tells of two Cilician stylites, one of whom was Chalcedonian and the other Monophysite. The Chalcedonian put a portion of the Monophysite's Eucharistic bread into boiling water and it was dissolved. The "holy Eucharist of the orthodox church" not only was not dissolved, but caused the boiling water to go cold and itself remained intact - and was not even made damp.¹ The need to uphold doctrinal truth is, in this author's view, the reason why miracles take place. He reports the words of a monk who held that there were miracles because of heresies in the church. They ensured that feeble souls would be upheld and erring souls converted.² Similar miracles are also reported by John Rufus in the Plerophoria, except that, in these cases, it is the Monophysite version of theological truth which is validated by the miracles. He recounts how the Eucharist of the Monophysites was visibly transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ at the Church of the Apostles at Caesarea in order to persuade Juvenal, on his way back from Chalcedon, to change his mind.³ The appearance of similar miracles in these two sources reveals, of course, the weakness of this form of proof. It would, however, have impressed the readers of the work and upheld members of the authors' party.

1. John Moschus, Prat 29 (PG 87.3, 2876C-2877A). For other controversial miracles, see Prat 26, 30, 36, 46, 48, 49, 79, 106, 188.
2. John Moschus, Prat 213 (PG 87.3, 3105C).
3. John Rufus, Plerophoria 10 (PO pp.22-27). For discussion of this type of miracle, see Remus, Pagan Christian Conflict, p.80.

Since doctrinal conflict is an important theme running through all Cyril's writing, it is surprising that he does not include any miracle stories which demonstrate the rightness of the Catholic faith. Erring monks are brought back into the Chalcedonia fold through exhortation rather than miraculous events. Euthymius, for example, offered a statement of faith to the Monophysites Elpidius and Gerontius, which persuaded the former but not the latter.¹ Sabas, when he discovered a pair of Nestorian monks occupying Eudocia's Tower, expended much effort persuading them of their errors.² Given the possibility of opponents trumping a miracle by an even more startling display of power, this choice of tactics was wise.

Miracles play an important part in the Cyrillian corpus. They testify to the guiding hand of God which lies behind the growth of the monasteries. They are an essential part of the history. In Cyril, the category of the miraculous has moved out of the realm of personal sanctity and relationships and into the realms of politics and church history.

1. 42.15-44.8.

2. 128.11-16.

6:3. The virtue of παρρησία.

The miracle stories demonstrate that the monasteries existed because God co-operated with the founders in sustaining and prospering them. Cyril is concerned to show that the function played by the monasteries in the church and society of Palestine, and in the Empire as well, depended on the help given by God. This divine power comes to the desert through the life of the saint. The fruit of his ascetic struggle is that he knows the will of God - as is shown by the miracles of clairvoyance - and can draw on the power of God - shown especially in the nature miracles. The saints "played in the heavenly sphere a role analogous to that played on earth by the great men of the court, through whom petitions could be more efficaciously brought to the Emperor's notice than if they were directly addressed to him; in the language of the day the same terms were applied to both heavenly and earthly patrons, whose suffragia were sought".¹

To describe this state of intimacy with God, Cyril uses the word παρρησία. Παρρησία is one of many ascetic virtues praised by Cyril. Among these, special emphasis is given to humility (ταπεινοφροσύνη) and to obedience (ὑπακοή). In his understanding of spiritual progress, the latter describes the way of life based on the former.² He also repeats standard ascetic teaching on prayer, fasting, vigils and manual labour.³ In these passages there is little that is original.⁴ Passages which contain this teaching are - as has been noted - strongly influenced by Egyptian sources.⁵

1. Jones, Later Roman Empire, p.958.

2. Among the references to these virtues, see 17.13-14; 89.13-14; 92.4; 120.22 for ταπεινοφροσύνη; 29.22-24; 122.22 for ὑπακοή.

3. For example, 12.15; 17.10; 204.15 for prayer; 14.15; 34.3; 89.11; 93.22; 95.15 for fasting; 34.22; 57.24; 66.12; 93.22 for vigils; 17.18; 92.2-10; 206.10-15; 225.5 for labours.

4. Chitty (Desert a City, p.131) comments; "We have little impression of originality in Cyril's personal religion".

5. See above, pp. 80-81.

Cyril's use of the word *παρρησία* merits special attention as an original feature of his ascetic teaching. Already current in Christian thinking, Cyril makes it the goal of the ascetic life and, as a result, it influences his whole account of the ascetic enterprise.¹

In its origin in Classical Greek, *παρρησία* is a political term. It is that freedom to speak openly which was a privilege prized in the Greek city state. Within a cluster of meanings which express this freedom, H.Schlier isolates three.² It can mean the right to say anything; or the truth of the words which are spoken; or the courage required of the speaker to state his convictions openly. The word could also be used in a negative sense when freedom of speech was misused and the words were shameless, immoral and destructive. Later it developed, in its use by Cynic philosophers, into a moral concept. Equivalent to *ἐλευθερία* it referred to the man who was morally free. These philosophers were renowned for acting in an insolent and scandalous way, and this behaviour could explain why the word fell into disrepute and why, by the time that the New Testament was written, its use was limited to certain strands of the tradition.³

The main use in the New Testament is in the context of the preaching of the Gospel. Paul proclaims the Gospel boldly because of the total confidence which he has in God and the truth of what he preaches. This enables him to speak with openness and with no concern about persecution, rejection or any human obstacle which might be placed in the way of the spread of the Gospel. An example of this is in the Acts of the Apostles, after Peter and John had been released from prison (albeit after an overnight stay only). The congregation prayed together and "all were filled with the Holy

1. Festugière notes (*MO* 1, p.59); "Le mot *παρρησία* dans les Vies des Moines mériterait une étude".
2. Art. *παρρησία* in *TWNT* Vol 5, pp.871-876.
3. See W.C.Van Unnik, 'The Christian's Freedom of Speech in the New Testament', *BJRL* 44(1961)466-488 (p.471).

Spirit and spoke the word of God with *παρρησία*.¹ This most common New Testament meaning of *παρρησία* refers not to the relationship with God in itself but to a result of it, the fearless preaching of the Gospel.

This preaching of the Gospel could arouse opposition. Later Christians were required to confess the faith within an environment of hostility or open persecution. *παρρησία* became a quality of the witness of the martyr. Eusebius describes how the martyrs of Palestine would speak out intrepidly (*παρρησία* *ἔθεσθαι*) exhorting their persecutors to turn to God.² Boldness of address to holders of authority could be used in other situations too. Church historians describe holy men reprimanding emperors or high imperial officials with *παρρησία*.³ Or they might use *παρρησία* in instructing an official to carry out a particular course of action, as when Abba Jonas told the notables of Constantinople to give aid to the victims of barbarian pillaging and spoke to them with *παρρησία*.⁴ This boldness of speech was a regular feature of the Lives of the Holy Men. Simeon Stylites is said by Evagrius to have written to the Emperor with *παρρησία*, and Palladius tells of the Galatian priest Philoromus who incurred abuse and torture for speaking to the Emperor Julian with *παρρησία*.⁵ Monks, in exercising this responsibility to speak out, looked back to the example of John the Baptist who died as a punishment for speaking out against a corrupt authority.

1. Acts 4.31. Compare Acts 2.29; 4.13; 9.27; 13.46 etc. Ephesians 6.19; 1Thess 2.2.
2. Eusebius, *MartP* 4.9 (SC 132.14).
3. For example Sozomen, *HE* 7.25.2 (GCS. 339.1-3). Theodoret, *HE* 5.18.23 (GCS 313.9). For other examples, see G.J.M. Bartelink, *Quelques observations sur παρρησία dans la littérature paléo-chrétienne*, Graecitas et latinitas Christianorum primaeva supplementa, fasciculus 3 (Nijmegen 1970) pp.7-57 (pp.37-40).
4. *VHypatii* 65.1 (*MO* 2, p.22).
5. Evagrius, *HE* 1.13. (Bidez, 22.15); Palladius, *HLaus* 45 (Butler, 132.22).

The use of the word *παρρησία* in this context of open and bold speech towards other men, especially those in authority, is the primary use in the Church Historians and a number of the Lives of the Saints, including Egyptian sources. But the word is not used in this way by Cyril, nor by Theodoret in his Religious History, a work which influenced Cyril in his choice of vocabulary at this point. Cyril describes his heroes as enjoying a harmonious relationship with the Emperors, in which the defiant overtones contained in the concept of *παρρησία* would have been inappropriate.¹

An alternative use of *παρρησία* in the Bible is to describe the human relationship with God. The first occurrence of this use is in the Septuagint version of Job 22.26, which reads "*παρρησιασθησεν ἐνώπιον κυρίου*", and this meaning is developed by Philo and Josephus.² The most significant texts in this context are in the First Epistle of John. Here, there are differences from the use in other parts of the New Testament. There *παρρησία* is always towards other men - in John, it is towards God. There it is a gift used in the spread of the Gospel in this age - in John, it is eschatological. There it is manifested by the apostles - in John, it is available for all who are cleansed by God. It encompasses the ideas of trust, conviction of salvation, overcoming of sin and the power to pray. Among the relevant passages is: "This is the *παρρησία* which we have towards him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us".³

This meaning of *παρρησία* came to be used especially in sources from Asia Minor. It described the believer's relationship with God, the relationship of a son rather than a slave. This reproduces the condition of Adam before the Fall who "being filled

1. An example of a non-confrontational use of *παρρησία* occurs in the description of Maximus the Confessor's words to his monks delivered with *παρρησία ἀγαπητική*. See Maximus, Capitula de caritate 4.32, cited, with other examples, in Bartelink, 'Quelques observations', p.42.
2. Van Unnik, 'Christian's Freedom of Speech', (p.471).
3. 1John 5.14; see also 1John 2.28; 3.21; 4.17; 5.14. Also Hebrews 4.16.

with *παρρησία*, enjoying the divine manifestation itself, face to face".¹ This *παρρησία*, lost at the Fall, is restored through Baptism. "Those who yesterday were captives are now free and citizens of the Church, those who previously were in the place of shame are now in *παρρησία* and justice".²

The *παρρησία*, given at baptism, grows through ascetic discipline, especially prayer. Theodoret describes the spiritual progress of James of Nisibis: "Thus, his *παρρησία* towards God increased each day and, asking from God what it was necessary to ask, he immediately received it".³ This form of words was reproduced by Cyril and applied to Euthymius.⁴ It is associated by Theodoret with the well-known verse of St Paul: "And we, with our unveiled faces reflecting like mirrors the brightness of the Lord, all are changed from glory to glory as we are turned into the image which we reflect".⁵ This idea was connected with that of *παρρησία* in the Syriac tradition. "Il faut tout d'abord se souvenir que le terme grec *παρρησία* a été, dans la peshitta, soit conservé en transcription syriaque (pâreshîyâ), soit rendu par un idiotisme: galyût'afê, littéralement le dévoilement de la face, ou par une tournure équivalent".⁶ The connection of these ideas permits us to connect the passage describing Sabas' progress in the spiritual life and that referring to Euthymius. This passage, too, is derived from Theodoret's description of James of Nisibis. "Sabas remained in the ravine alone for five years, speaking to God in the silence and cleansing the mirror of his mind".⁷ The early stages of the ascetic career of both Euthymius and Sabas established their *παρρησία* before God.

1. Gregory of Nyssa, *Oratio Cataphetica* 6.10
Compare Athanasius, in *Contra Gentes* 2, "the holy writings say that the first man at the beginning held his spirit turned towards God with unashamed *παρρησία*". Discussed in R.G.Coquin, 'La thème de la *παρρησία* et ses expressions symboliques dans les rites d'initiation à Antioche', *POC* 20(1970)3-19.
2. John Chrysostom in *Huit catéchèses baptismales*, SC (Paris 1957) p.153.
3. Theodoret, *HRel* 1.3.8 (SC Vol 1, p.164).
4. 15.8-9.
5. 2Corinthians 3.18.
6. Coquin, 'La thème de la *παρρησία*, (p.12):
7. 99.5-6.

παρρησία is associated especially with the power to perform miracles. "Parce qu'il (the saint) connaît la volonté divine et sait demander ce qui lui est conforme, sa libre demande peut être agréée par Dieu et s'insérer dans le plan divin...Les deux facultés, celle de connaître Dieu et celle d'obtenir de lui des faveurs sont étroitement liées",¹ Euthymius is hesitant to accede to the request of the people of Jerusalem to pray for rain. "I", he says, "on account of the crowd of my sins do not have the *παρρησία* to pray about this".² However, humility and *παρρησία* go together, and his prayer for rain is swiftly answered.³ The answering of prayer provides assurance that the saint is acceptable to God. A similar example is the miracle of the fig-tree. John the Hesychast plants a fig-seed in rock, saying that, if it bears fruit, this will assure him that he will receive the gift of the Kingdom of God (*ὁπωρεᾶν χαρίζεται μοι τὴν τῶν οὐρανῶν βασιλείαν*).³ Theodosius also works miracles through his *παρρησία* with God, when his unlighted censer gives forth a sweet scent on his arrival at the place intended by God for the site of his monastery.⁴

Growth in intimacy with God comes to fulfilment at the moment of death. Euthymius' final words to his monks as he lies dying concern the hope of *παρρησία*. "If I find *παρρησία* towards God, I will ask this first request of him, that I may be in spirit with you and with those who come after you until eternity".⁵ Sabas is granted a similar closeness to God, which leads to his intercession being effective. Miracles are performed at his grave and at a distance in response to requests made to him.⁶ A sign of this *παρρησία* is the vision of Romulus in which St Theodore tells that Sabas has been escorted to the presence of God.⁷ Theodosius and his successor, Sophronius, are also granted the gift of *παρρησία* after their death.⁸

1. MH, p.178.

2. 38.15-16.

3. 220.14-15.

4. Theodore of Petra, VThds 32.5.

5. 59.9-11.

6. 184.20.

7. 185.10-13.

8. 241.4-7; Theodore of Petra, VThds 91.22.

The use of the word *παρρησία* to refer to the future glory of the saint can be found in other works. St Thecla, for example, when near to death saw Christ in heaven "with great *παρρησία*".¹ But the combination of the ideas of heavenly glory and effective intercession has an importance in Cyril's writing which it does not have elsewhere. The single reference in theodore of Petra's Life of Theodosius suggests that the hope of the continuing protection of the saint after his death was a feature of life in the Palestinian desert, rather than peculiar to Cyril.

The moment of death, or rather of entry into glory, is given especial emphasis by Cyril, being dated with a precision not given to other events in the Lives.² The saint's work during his lifetime - the establishing of the monastery, the ministry to those in need and the overcoming of heresy - only comes to fulfilment after his death. Events confirm the hope expressed by the saint on his death-bed.³ His intercession is really experienced as being more effective and his protection more powerful once he has been welcomed into the closer presence of God.⁴

In addition to this use of the word *παρρησία*, Cyril has also reproduced the pejorative sense of the word in certain passages. Euthymius rebuked Maron and Clematius by saying; "Know that it is folly for a monk to speak or be moved against what is fitting or to speak boldly (*παρρησίαζεσθαι*). The Fathers say that *παρρησία* is dangerous and gives rise to passions".⁵ This passage is modelled by Cyril on a section of the Apophthegmata

1. VThecl 14.67-68 (SHG p.328).

2. See above pp.

3. For example 59.9-11.

4. Further evidence for the importance of the moment of death in the monastic tradition is provided by stories in which a holy man sees the soul of a dying monk being carried into heaven. See 214.21-215.7; VAnton 60,65 (PG 26; 929A, 933C-936A); Palladius, Hlaus 7 (Butler 26.16-17) (Butler 26.16-17). Note also Chariton's vision of the Holy Trinity at the moment of his death in VChar (PG 116; 917B).

5. 31.13-15. See also I.Hausherr, Penthos (Kalamazoo, Michigan 1982) pp.94-95.

Patrum.¹ It was also the inspiration behind a homily on delivered by Antiochus, a monk of the Great Laura (or Mar Saba, as it was called at that time) in the seventh century.² *παρρησία* is used in this negative sense in the writhings of Dorotheus of Gaza.³ It could be translated in this context as "an excessive intimacy". The occasions when Cyril uses the word in this sense are dependent on Egyptian sources and constitute an exception to his usual use of the concept.

The word *παρρησία* expresses Cyril's convictions about the contribution which the holy men make to the church and society. Closeness to God is, of course, the goal of the ascetic life. But Cyril is also concerned to show how this intimacy is a powerful force which is manifested for the good of the church and for individuals. *παρρησία* describes a relationship with God which is shown through the freedom to intercede effectively for those for whom the saint has responsibility. It is as though the virtue that has been amassed through years of ascetic struggle is cashed in and revealed in the form of usable power. It combines the ascetic emphasis on the individual's ascent to God with the demands of society for an effective form of patronage.

1. Adoph Patr, Agathon 1 (PG 65, 109A).

2. Antiochus Monachos, Hom 16 (*πρὸ παρρησίας*) (PG 89, 1476D-1477D).

3. Dorotheus of Gaza, Instructions 4.53 (SC p.233).

Chapter Seven.

HERESY AND ORTHODOXY IN THE DESERT

7:1 The purpose of the discussion

Cyril places the conclusion of his work at the beginning. The opening words of the Life of Euthymius are a majestic statement of orthodox faith in Christ. "The only-begotten Son and Word of God... with the Father he is co-unoriginate and co-eternal (συνάναρχος τε καὶ συναίδιος) and consubstantial (ὁμοούσιος), in his ineffable love for mankind, in the good pleasure of the Father and with the will of the Holy Spirit he deigned for our salvation to become flesh",¹ In this, and other, dogmatic statements, Cyril borrows ideas and phrases from the writings of Justinian, especially the Contra Originem and the Confessio Fidei.² His choice of these works as his main doctrinal sources is a clear indication of his conviction that the true doctrine of the Incarnation was defined at the Council of Chalcedon and re-affirmed at the Second Council of Constantinople which met in 553.³ His writing relates how, through the courageous witness to truth of the ascetics, this orthodoxy prevailed against the assaults of the heretics.

Cyril emphasises the orthodox beliefs of all his heroes. In addition to describing Euthymius' support for the Council of Chalcedon, Cyril devotes a chapter, which he attributes to the double oral source of John the Hesychast and Thallelaios, to a statement of Euthymius' rejection of heresy.⁴ The substantial sections of the Life of Sabas describing his relationships with the Emperors Anastasius and Justinian show in him an unbending loyalty to the orthodoxy based on Chalcedon.⁵ Cyriac provides a spirited refutation of the errors of Origenism.⁶ The zeal of John the

1. 6.22-7.2.

2. See above p. 82, and MH. pp.73-76.

3. 41.4-44.4; 83.7-12.

4. 38.18-41.3; a section based on a passage of Theodoret (HRel 5.2.16-17. SC Vol 1, p.330) and on Justinian's Confessio Fidei. See MH, pp.73-76.

5. 143.16-144.28; 148.6-158.11; 176.2-20.

6. 229.24-231.19.

Hesychast and Theodosius in struggling for the orthodox faith is referred to, although not described in detail.¹ The structure of the Lives shows that Cyril considers that the fathers' witness to orthodoxy was inseparably related to their work of establishing monasteries. This twofold project resulted in the building up of the Church.

The fathers of the desert were opposed to all heretics. The list of their enemies includes names and teachings which they were hardly likely to have encountered in their lives in the desert. Euthymius, for example, abhorred not only Origen but also Arius, Sabellius, Nestorius, Eutyches and the Manichaeans, and Sabas prophesied the overthrow of Arianism, Nestorianism and Origenism.² Within this general condemnation of well-known heretical teachings, Cyril describes the historical development of two conflicts over doctrine within the Church. Euthymius was led to resist the growing power of the Monophysites or, as Cyril always refers to them, the Aposchists. For Sabas the enemy was Origenism, an approach to the ascetic life with which Sabas struggled intermittently throughout his life in the desert and which continued to play a dominant part in church life after his death.

While describing these controversies Cyril seems to be aware of the vulnerability of the monks of the Judaeian desert to the charge of Nestorianism. Followers of the teaching of Nestorius and Theodore of Mopsuestia were few in the area around Jerusalem. We hear of the two Nestorians who were in possession of Eudocia's Tower on Jebel Muntar and of the companions of Sabas who upheld the teaching of Theodore during the discussions at Constantinople.³

1. For John, "I have omitted to describe his struggles on behalf of the faith which he proved (εὐδοκία) by his reaction to the doctrines and the supporters of Origen and Theodore of Mopsuestia and the persecutions which he endured... on behalf of the apostolic teachings" (221.19-22); for Theodosius see 238.23-25.
2. 39.26-40.25; 175.24.
3. 127.20-21 (although earlier Sabas had shared their mountain-top with no apparent discomfort, see 97.24-26); 176.7-9.

Yet, in spite of this scarcity of Nestorians, when Galasius set off to Constantinople to plead the cause of the orthodox against the Origenists, he singled out the Nestorians rather than his opponents, the Origenists, for special condemnation in his parting words to the monks of the Great Laura.¹ The explanation of passages such as this is not that Nestorianism is seen as a serious threat to the orthodoxy of the monasteries, but that the supporters of the Council of Chalcedon are vulnerable to this charge. Monophysites frequently attacked the Definition of Chalcedon as being Nestorian. The condemnations of Nestorius and Theodore in the mouths of Cyril's monks are a form of defence rather than attack. For the same reasons monks from Jerusalem were ready to share in the condemnation of the Three Chapters at Constantinople in 553.²

The heretical movements of Monophysitism and Origenism have stimulated an extensive literature.³ Here, neither the reconstruction

1. 194.19-22, although Gelasius does add that Origen is as bad as Theodore.
2. 119.1-6.
3. I have found several modern works especially helpful. These include H.Bacht, 'Die Rolle des Orientalischen Mönchtums in den kirchenpolitischen Auseinandersetzungen um Chalkedon (432-519)' in Das Konzil von Chalkedon, ed Grillmeier, Bacht (Würzburg 1953-62) pp.193-314; D.J.Chitty, The Desert a City (Oxford 1966) and W.H.C.Frend, The Rise of the Monophysite Movement (Cambridge 1972). The fullest account of the Origenist dispute is still F.Diekamp, Die Origenistischen Streitigkeiten im sechsten Jahrhundert (Münster 1899). A.Couret, La Palestine sous les empereurs grecs 326-636 (Grenoble 1869) helpfully harmonises Cyril with other contemporary and medieval sources. The theological work of the leading heretical authors has also been analysed and discussed. The Christology of the Monophysite movement has been presented by J.Lebon, 'The Christology of Syrian Monophysitism' in Das Konzil von Chalkedon, ed Grillmeier, Bacht Vol 1, pp.425-580, and R.Chesnut, Three Monophysite Christologies (Oxford 1976). The criticisms of their opponents are discussed by C.Moeller, 'Le chalcédonisme et le néo-chalcédonisme en orient de 451 à la fin du VI^e siècle', in Das Konzil von Chalkedon, ed Grillmeier, Bacht, Vol.I pp.637-720, and by P.T.R.Gray, The Defense of Chalcedon in the East (Leiden 1979). The thought of the Origenists has been illuminated by the study of the influence of Evagrius by A.Guillaumont, Les 'Kephalaia Gnostica' d'Evagre le Pontique et l'histoire de l'Origenisme chez les Grecs et chez les Syriens *Patristica Sorbonensia* 5 (Paris 1962). The thought of Leontius of Byzantium has been presented by D.B.Evans, Leontius of

of the events of this stormy period of the church's history nor the presentation of the theological content of the sources will be at the centre of the discussion, although they are, inevitably, relevant and the findings of the studies referred to are assumed.

We will be concerned with the relationship between the Judaeae monasteries and the growth and the decline of the heresies. The theological work of the heretics was not an abstract theological exercise conducted in the seclusion of the scholar's study or the recluse's cell. It was forced out of a situation of conflict and, often, of a struggle for survival. The heresies had firm roots in the society in which they grew, and the nature of that society determined the nature of the heretical movements. The questions raised here concern the institution of monasticism in Palestine. What were the characteristics which made the Palestinian desert a favourable breeding ground for heresy? What characteristics prevented heresy from flourishing? What, indeed, is heresy? There are three main areas of discussion to be distinguished - diversity, internationalism and theological study. Each of these headings will lead into the consideration of an aspect of the phenomenon called heresy. In conclusion, Cyril's understanding of what heresy is, and the orthodoxy which he opposes to it, will be shown.

Byzantium, DOST 13 (Washington 1970). His conclusions have been challenged by B.Daley, 'The Origenism of Leontius of Byzantium', JThS NS 27(1976)333-369.

7:2. Diversity and Deviance.

Sabas' achievement was the creation of an environment in which the monastic life could be lived out. His Life shows him concerned about water supplies, building programmes and food-parcels. The challenge of how to sustain life in an inhospitable terrain motivated much of his work. Not only did it influence his own life and ministry, but also the nature of the monastic communities which he founded.

Community life was conditioned by geography. In Egypt, monks were attracted to mountains or to villages on the banks of the Nile.¹ These geographical features provided a central focus to monastic life, drawing the monks together by a kind of centrifugal force. In Palestine, in contrast, the topography had a centripetal influence. The early settlements were in the deep valleys of the semi-desert where water was to be found. Descriptions of the sites show that the monks settled in the caves which were set in the steep sides of a wadi.² The search for a suitable shelter led the monk along the ravine away from the centre of the monastery. As the monastery grew, so it became more scattered. The Egyptian river and village and mountain, on the one hand, and the Palestinian desert wadi, on the other, led to the emergence of markedly differing styles of monastic life.

In the Judaeen wadis, many of the caves were set high in the ravine walls and were hard to reach. They were inaccessible to all but the most determined climber - and this difficulty of obtaining

1. For the mountain, see Palladius. HLaus 8 (Butler, 28.13-15); for the village and the river, see VPach G¹ 12, 29, 54 (Athanassakis, 16.4-11. 38.6-23, 80.4-5). Also Chitty, Desert a City, pp.14-16.
2. See Y.Hirschfeld, Archeological Survey of Israel, Map of Herodium (108/2) 17-11 (Jerusalem 1985) pp.34*-36*, and 'The Judaeen Desert Monasteries in the Byzantine Period, their Development and Internal Organization in the light of Archeological Research' (dissertation, Hebrew University of Jerusalem 1987) pp.134-144; M.Marcoff and D.J.Chitty, 'Notes on monastic research in the Judaeen wilderness' 1928-9', PEFQst (1929)167-178; O.Meinardus, 'Notes on the Laurae and Monasteries of the Wilderness of Judaea', SBFLA 15(1964-5)220-250.

access has deterred modern researchers as well as contemporary visitors.¹ These features of the environment in which the monks lived discouraged a close relationship with the central buildings of the monastery and made the oversight exercised by the superior limited in its application. There was an inevitable tendency in the direction of diversity rather than centralisation.

Membership of the monastery required conformity in the economic life of the settlement. The means of production which earned the monks their livelihood has already been discussed.² The monk who entered the community was expected to play his part in its work. When John the Hesychast settled at the Great Laura, Sabas immediately entrusted him to the steward (ἡ οἰκονόμῳ), who set him to work carrying water, cooking for the builders, transporting stones - the building of a guest-house was in full swing - acting as guest-master and arranging transport.³ Sabas and Cyriac also found themselves fully occupied with the multitude of jobs necessary to the smooth running of the community after their arrival in the desert.⁴ This approach to the monastic life lies behind the well-known story of the Palestinian Abba Silvanus, who led a group of disciples from Scetis to Sinai to Gaza until the establishing of a laura at Gerara. A new arrival criticised the monks for the large amount of manual work which they did. Silvanus taught him a sharp lesson by neglecting to summon him to the meal. "Mary needs Martha", he said, "it is really thanks to Martha that Mary is praised".⁵ The training given to the new members (τοὺς ἀποταξιζομένους or τῶν ἀρχαρίων) emphasised

1. 15.13; 16.7; 98.7-23. See also the comments of Chitty, Marcoff and Meinardus in the articles cited in the previous note.
2. See pp. 141-144.
3. 205.7-19; 206.10-15. Compare 109.15-18 for another example of monks providing for builders.
4. 92.7-16; 224.27-225.6.
5. ApophPatr Silvanus 5 (PG 65. 409C-D). For an account of the life of Silvanus, see L. Régnault, 'Les apophthegmes des pères en Palestine aux Ve-VIe siècles', Iren 54(1981) 320-330.

participation in worship and monastic discipline (τὴν μοναχικὴν ἀκρίβειαν).¹ This discipline encouraged obedience and hard work. Conformity in matters of faith is never mentioned by Cyril in connection with entry into the monastery.

This emphasis on physical labour made membership of the monastery fluid. The presence of 'workmen' in the monastery is often referred to.² In addition to these labourers who were connected economically with the monastery, there were close links with neighbouring villages. Leontius and his companions were able to recruit support from the local peasantry (ἀγροικικὴν βοήθειαν) in their assault on the Great Laura.³ This variety of connections with the local communities ensured that membership of the laura was not clearly defined. There were different degrees of dependance ranging from, at one extreme, monks whose lives were lived in a close physical and spiritual relationship with the central buildings, to, at the other, men who settled in the neighbourhood and took advantage of the economic opportunities provided by the laura.⁴ This monastic fringe, where a monk could live in relative freedom and independence, enjoying minimal contact with the centre of the laura, provided a fertile breeding ground for heretical and deviant behaviour.

The title of 'heresy' has been applied to essentially different phenomena. J.Gouillard has distinguished three forms of heresy. In addition to the major Christological heresies which led to the convocation of the ecumenical councils and the doctrinal errors denounced by theologians in the twelfth century, he points to a third level of heresy. "Les sectes syncrétistes à mi-chemin

1. 113.8-10; 205.8. Compare 206.6-10.

2. For example 205.15-19.

3. 190.16-21.

4. These remarks apply primarily to the laurite life. Coenobia were often surrounded by a wall which separated them from the surrounding countryside more effectively than the walls of a laura which surrounded only the central buildings. They were also subject to a more rigorous discipline. See 64.17-18; 206.4-10.

entre la gnose et le christianisme (Marcionisme), les dissidences très anciennes coupées de l'église principale avant l'avènement de l'Empire chrétien...et qui poursuivaient une évolution propre, les mouvements illuministes, et ainsi de suite".¹ This form of heresy manifests itself in a variety of sects - Manicheism, Marcionism, Messalianism - but the multiplicity of manifestation conceals a deeper unity. "Le mouvement hérétique unique dont les appellations variées ou successives ne doivent pas masquer la profonde continuité. Enraciné dans la gnose antique, il fonde sur une théorie 'dualiste', pour employer l'épithète consacrée par l'érudition, une subversion pratique de l'ordre naturel, familial, social et liturgique".²

Seen in its social context, this heretical tendency shows itself in a radical rejection of all levels of social structure. It provides a contrast to the Church, which, after the conversion of Constantine, came to be increasingly integrated into Byzantine society and to play an important part in it. The deviance of these heretics upset the order of society which was manifested in the church as well as in secular life. The decrees of the Synod of Gangra, which met about 343 to combat the movement led by Eustathius of Sebaste in Armenia, Paphlagonia and Pontus, describe the heretics as eating on fast days but fasting on Sundays; celebrating the Eucharist with water instead of wine; and including women who shaved their heads and wore men's clothing. The rich, instead of distributing their wealth to the poor, were told to desert their possessions and leave them behind. The roles allotted to rich and poor, master and slave, male and female were disrupted within the heretical communities, which had a disturbing and anarchic effect on social relationships.³

1. J.Gouillard, 'L'hérésie dans l'Empire byzantin des origines au XIIe siècle', Travaux et mémoires 1(1965)299-324 (pp.299-300).
2. E.Patlagean, 'L'histoire de la femme déguisée en moine et l'évolution de la sainteté féminine à Byzance', StMed 3e série 17(1976)597-623 (p.613).
3. For these examples see E.Patlagean, Pauvreté économique et pauvreté sociale à Byzance, 4e-7e siècles (Paris 1977) pp.135-140.

Evagrius describes the behaviour of certain monks, implying that he is speaking of monks from Palestine. "They have arrived at impassibility, returning to the world right in the middle of all its tumult. They show themselves as people who are mad...They are ready to eat with perfect detachment... They often frequent bath-houses, usually mixing with women and washing with them...They have become so completely masters of themselves that they have subdued their natural instincts".¹ It may have been these monks who were the subject of the compassion of Theodosius who opened a special house within his monastery "like a second monastery".² The monks for whom these facilities were intended are described by Theodore. "There were on the mountains and in the caves, monks who struggled in the combats of the Christian life but not according to Christ. They attributed to their own strength their ascetic labours...so that, delivered to Satan, their concern for their spiritual salvation made them lose their bodily health...and their deranged spirits did not preside over their thoughts as they should".³

The identity of these monks who aroused the concern of Theodosius is unclear. The reference to an appearance of insanity suggests that Theodore of Petra is describing the same group of monks as Evagrius, although in less complimentary terms. In any case, the passage from the Life of Theodosius points to the existence of monks in the wilderness whose behaviour did not conform to the normal monastic standards and who were seen as undermining the health of the desert communities. Perhaps they had to be forced to avail themselves of the care provided by Theodosius and his special house was for correctional purposes.

Dualist heresy exercised an attraction in the towns and villages of Palestine. Euthymius, after a period wandering through the desert, settled at Caparbaricha in the neighbourhood of Hebron. Here he

1. Evagrius, HE 1.21 (Bidez 30.15-30).
2. Theodore of Petra, VThds 42.9.
3. Theodore of Petra, VThds 41.16-42.1.

found some villagers from Ziph who had accepted Manicheism and he converted them to the Catholic faith.¹ Cyril, following the example of numerous other authors, enjoys the play on words between the teachings of Mani and mania or madness (τὴν τῆςμανίας ἐπώνυμον αἵρεσιν).² Procopius tells how the inhabitants of Gaza became Christian under pressure but relapsed to Manicheism if circumstances permitted.³

Among the heretical practices attacked at the Synod of Gangra were women dressing as men and the disregarding of the church's rules of fasting and feasting. Both of these themes occur in the writings of Cyril. Cyriac's disciple John tells Cyril the edifying story of Maria, a psaltria at the Church of the Anastasis. After being the object of scandalous accusations, she retired to the desert where she lived for eighteen years protected by God. John and his companions assumed her to be a male ascetic and only realised her true sex when she pointed it out to them.⁴ This story belongs to a series of similar tales of women disguising themselves as men, which were popular in the sixth and seventh centuries and circulated until the ninth century when changing patterns of sanctity began to affirm the validity of the ascetic life lived out within marriage.⁵ An early example is that of Pelagia, which Patlagean tentatively dates to the fifth century on the grounds of the simplicity both of its style and its structure.⁶

1. 22.22-23.3.

2. 22.22-23. For references to other authors, see MO 3/2, p.76.

3. Procopius, Secret History 2.26 (LCL Vol 6, p.138). Frend suggests that Procopius may have been referring to Monophysites and that, just as Chalcedonians were liable to be called Nestorians, so Monophysites were called Manicheans (Rise of the Monophysite Movement, pp.109,132,152-153).

4. 233.5-234.19. For a discussion of this story, see Benedicta Ward, Harlots of the Desert (Oxford 1987) pp.26-34.

5. These stories are described in Patlagean, 'L'histoire de la femme déguisée en moine'.

6. Patlagean, 'L'histoire de lae femme déguisée en moine', (pp.599-603). See also Ward, Harlots, pp.57-65.

The story of Mary of Egypt became popular and circulated widely. It probably had a Palestinian provenance.¹ Cyril included it in order to edify his readers, but it is likely that its origins lie within the milieu of the dualist sects, a background which would not have gained Cyril's approbation. Patlagean points out that the adoption of man's clothing by a woman is equivalent to self-mutilation and is a radical denial of her human nature.² As a source of this form of asceticism she suggests the Gnostic writings, an example of which is the Gospel of Thomas. "When you make one single thing out of the male and the female, so that the male is not male and the female is not female...then you will enter into the Kingdom".³

Members of these sects claimed a liberty in matters of fasting. Epiphanius describes how the Messalians concentrated so fully on prayer that they neglected the discipline of fasting.⁴ Cyril shows that Sabas exercised a similar freedom with regard to his eating habits, although, in his case, it is seen as the result of a special grace. The occasion was a meal at the house of John, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, and Sabas ate the food which was set before him in lavish quantities. This ability is admired by those present and the Patriarch remarks. "'The rest of us can bear neither to fast nor to have an excess, but this man of God.. knows how to live in humility and in excess"'.⁵ Cyril introduced this anecdote with the statement that Sabas is accustomed to fast for a full week but is also capable of eating a second meal immediately after a first in the course of showing hospitality, without harming his digestion.⁶ The claiming of freedom from the normal demands of an ascetic régime is seen as a gift of the Spirit by both Cyril and by the Messalians and dualist sects.

1. This is indicated by the appearance of the story in John Moschus, Prat 170 (PG 87.3:3036D-3037B).

2. Patlagean, 'L'histoire de la femme déguisée en moine' (p.599).

3. Gospel of Thomas Logion 22.

4. Epiphanius, Panarion 47.2 (GCSpp. 217-218).

5. 165.23-26.

6. 165.5-11.

The Palestinian desert nurtured a fascinating variety of ascetic practices and beliefs. A celebrated product of this environment was Symeon Salos. Symeon was a native of Edessa and arrived in Palestine with his friend John in the reign of the Emperor Justinian. He made his monastic profession in the presence of Nikon, the superior of the monastery of Gerasimus, where Cyril had earlier stayed. After a period spent in ascetic struggle in the region of the Jordan, Symeon travelled to Emesa where he was thought to be insane. His outrageous and unconventional behaviour shocked the townspeople who heaped criticism and abuse on him. But he also worked many miracles. His biographer, Leontius of Neapolis, presents him as orthodox in his faith, attacking the teachings of Origen. His behaviour, however, roots him in the shadowy world of popular religion which also produced heretical sectarian movements. The monastic society which produced Cyril and Sabas, the guardian of orthodoxy, also produced Symeon, the fool of Emesa.¹

These examples are not intended to show that Messalianism or Manicheism either influenced or threatened the monasteries of Euthymius and Sabas. They are offered to illustrate an aspect of the society in which the monasteries flourished. They show that there was a common background shared by many different groups, and that similar stories, practices and virtues can appear in both a heretical and orthodox context.

1. For the life of Symeon, see L.Ryden, Das Leben des Heiligen Narren Symeon von Leontius von Neapolis (Uppsala 1963); A-J.Festugière, Léontios de Néapolis, Vie de Syméon le Fou et Vie de Jean de Chypre (Paris 1974). Also, L.Ryden, 'The Holy Fool' in The Byzantine Saint ed S.Hackel (London 1981) pp.106-113.

7:3. Internationalism and Monophysitism.

The Palestinian monasteries drew their recruits from many nationalities. This was a consequence of the arrival of pilgrims in the Holy Land, and it led to the development of a cosmopolitan society in the desert. "Dagegen machten die Pilgerschwärme, die Hospize, die Mönche und Nonnen Jerusalem zum Sammelpunkt eines bunten Volkergemisches und diese, man möchte sagen, 'Internationalität' übertrug sich von Anfang an auf die Lauren und Koinobien der *ἐρημος*".¹

Cyril tells us the country of origin of forty-three of the monks who feature in his accounts. Of these, only seven were natives of the provinces of Palestine. The others came from a wide area. There was a monk from Rome - Paul, who became the superior of the New Laura. Another came from Alexandria. But most came from the regions to the north of Palestine, including Cappadocia, Syria and Galatia.² This rich mixture of nationalities was also found in the monastery of Choziba, where the monastic cemetery still contains a large number of inscriptions, providing the fullest evidence available to us for the racial composition of the monks.³

The internationalism of the monasteries influenced their reaction to the Council of Chalcedon. The century which followed the Council was a period in which opposition to it came to be concentrated in certain distinguishable areas. By 550 Egypt could be identified as Monophysite, as could the kingdoms of Ethiopia and Nubia (which both had close relationships with the

1. Kyrrillos, p.359.

2. Schwartz (Kyrrillos, p.359,n.1) has collated these references. For Paul the Roman, see 124.14. For John the Alexandrian, see 92.18. The Palestinian monks are mentioned at 124.25; 129.3 (not 129.13 as given by Schwartz); 130.24; 132.22; 189.18; 191.13; 196.9.

3. See A-M.Schneider, 'Das Kloster der Theotokos zu Choziba im Wadi el-Kelt', RQ 39(1931)297-332 (pp.317-329).

Alexandrian Patriarchate) and Armenia (where decisions about faith were influenced by the kingdom's vulnerable situation between the Byzantine and Persian Empires).¹ Syria was divided. The provinces of Syria Secunda and Pheonicia Maritima were predominantly Chalcedonian; while other areas, including Isauria, Cilicia Secunda, Syria Prima, Phoenicia Libanensia and Osrhöene, were centres of Monophysite strength.² Monophysitism had become the faith of limited but clearly defined parts of the Christian world.

The connection between nationalism and religion has been hotly debated by recent writers. E.L.Woodward argued that the Monophysite movement was motivated by political and nationalist forces.³ The display of religious fervour was an expression of the longing of a national group to break free from an oppressive and foreign Byzantine Empire. The Monophysite faith became an identification badge, a slogan adopted by a political movement. Support for this view is found in the accounts of Egyptian religious history of J.Maspero and E.R.Hardy.⁴ These writers drew attention to the national pride of the Egyptians; the influence of ancient Egyptian religious culture on Coptic Christianity and the division between the cosmopolitan Greek-speaking city of Alexandria and the Coptic villages of the Nile valley.⁵ These tendencies showed

1. See Frend, Rise of the Monophysite Movement, pp.258-259.
2. The distribution of Syrian dioceses between Chalcedonians and Monophysites is analysed in E.Honigmann, 'Evêques et Evêchés monophysites d'Asie intérieure au VIe siècle', CSCO Subsidia 2, Louvain 1951.
3. E.L.Woodward, Christianity and Nationalism in the Later Roman Empire (London 1916) pp.41-49.
4. J.Maspero, Histoire des Patriarches d'Alexandrie depuis la mort de l'empereur Anastase jusqu'à la réconciliation des églises jacobites (Paris 1923); E.R.Hardy, Christian Egypt (New York 1952).
5. Examples of the influence of Egyptian religion on Coptic Christianity are the suggestion of Amélineau, in 'Samuel de Qalamoun', RHR 30(1894)1-47 (p.15), that the figure of Osiris, who was seen as being incapable of suffering death, contributed to the Monophysite emphasis on Christ's freedom from suffering; and that of P.R.L.Brown, in World of Late Antiquity (London 1971) p.143, that the image of Isis suckling the infant Horus lay behind devotion to Mary the Theotokos.

themselves in the adoption of Coptic as the language of Egyptian Monophysite Christianity and the welcome given to Persian and Arab invaders, who promised freedom from the Byzantine Empire.

The nationalist thesis has been criticised by subsequent studies. P.Rousseau, for example, presented evidence which suggests that the connection between the town and the countryside in Egypt was close and that there was a plurality of interpretations of the Christian faith within Egypt.¹ A.H.M.Jones claimed that evidence that Egyptian Monophysites welcomed the Arab invaders is inadequate and that Monophysite literature appeared in Greek as well as in Coptic and Syriac.² Jones' article is a counsel against exaggerating the influence of nationalism on religious movements. Deep religious convictions motivated the members of heretical sects.

The vitality and resilience of Monophysitism was a result of its firm roots within society in the areas in which it flourished. The studies referred to above point to the combination of religious, political and social dimensions of the movement which, together, resulted in a formidable popular force which resisted the attempts by successive emperors either to stamp out or to integrate into the state church.³

Alongside a Monophysite faith went determined opposition to the Council of Chalcedon. Chalcedon's acceptance of a humble, human nature in Christ was seen as a result of its two nature Christology. Visible contradiction of this error was provided by the stirring examples of the ascetics who had overcome their human

1. P.Rousseau, Pachomius (Berkeley, California 1985) pp.9-12,28.
2. Severus of Antioch and Zacharias of Mitylene were from the area to the west of the Euphrates and wrote in Greek, but Philoxenus of Mabbug and John of Ephesus came from the east of the Euphrates and wrote in Syriac. See Jones, 'Were ancient heresies national or social movements in disguise?', JThS NS 10(1950)280-298 (pp.290-291).
3. For an account, see Frend, Rise of the Monophysite Movement, pp.143-296.

nature and clearly manifested divine power, put devils to flight and made God available to suppliants. They provided living proof that human nature is mastered by divine power.¹ Sometimes rejection of Chalcedon coexisted with a surprisingly Chalcedonian Christology. Shenute of Atripe anathematised Nestorius yet avoided offering worship to Mary and seems to have inclined towards an Antiochene-style word-man Christology.²

The strength of Monophysite theology lay in its ability to commend itself to uneducated monks from a peasant background. It was associated in their minds with the insistence of the Council of Nicaea that Christ was fully God. "In perpetual warfare against the demons on the edge of the desert and haunted by subconscious fears of vengeance from the old dispossessed national gods, the monks demanded as their protection the full armour of Christ".³ Once it had become firmly established in rural Egypt and Syria, Monophysitism proved to be unshakeable. It became a national as well as a religious phenomenon.⁴

The cosmopolitan society of Palestine did not provide a congenial setting for the flourishing of Monophysitism. In the Judaeen monasteries, cohesion was achieved through the use of a common language, Greek. There were exceptions. In Sabas' monastery the Armenian monks were permitted to worship in their own language. A substantial Armenian group grew up around the monk Jeremiah, who settled in the Great Laura with his disciples, Peter and Paul, some time after the accession of the Emperor Zeno in 491. At first they used the small oratory which had been built by Sabas when he established the laura, but when the community expanded and the Theotokos Church was built they moved into the

1. Brown, World of Late Antiquity, p.145.

2. See Frend, Rise of the Monophysite Movement, p.138.

3. Frend, Rise of the Monophysite Movement, p.141.

4. Chalcedon's condemnation of Dioscorus and elevation of the see of Constantinople above that of Alexandria ensured that Egyptian nationalist feelings would be aroused against it.

'God-built' cave church. There they worshipped in the Armenian language but joined the other monks to celebrate the Eucharist in Greek.¹ The monastery of Theodosius also provided facilities for worship in Armenian, and, in his case, there was a church for the Bessans too.² The attention given to these arrangements in the texts confirms the impression that they were exceptional and that the normal practice was to worship God in the Greek language.

As part of his argument against the nationalist character of the Monophysite heresy, A.H.M.Jones points to the existence of Syriac-speaking communities within the Palestinian Church, normally seen as a supporter of Chalcedon. He offers two pieces of evidence to support his argument. The first is the description by Eusebius of Procopius, the first martyr in his narrative, who was appointed deacon in Scythopolis with the responsibility of translating the Gospels into Aramaic. But Procopius was martyred in 303 AD and so his appointment to the office of deacon can be dated to the late third century, fully 150 years before the Council of Chalcedon.³ Jones' second piece of evidence comes from Mark the Deacon's Life of Porphyry, where reference is made to a Syriac group at Gaza. But Gaza is in the south-west of Palestine and so in an area where Egyptian influence was strong and Monophysitism well established.⁴ Neither passage supports the contention that there was a significant Syriac-speaking population in the Church in Palestine during the period following the Council of Chalcedon.

Such evidence as there is suggests a decline in the use of Syriac in the church in the provinces of Palestine. During her visit to Jerusalem at the start of the fifth century, Egeria listened to the cataphesis of the Bishop of Jerusalem. He taught

1. 100.11-12; 117.19-25.

2. Theodore of Petra, VThds 45.5-18.

3. Jones, 'Were the ancient heresies national or social movements in disguise?' (p.291). His reference is to Eusebius, MartP 1.1 (SC p.122).

4. Jones cites VPorph 66, 68. (Kugener 53.23, 55.22). For Christianity in Gaza, see G.Downey, Gaza in the Early Sixth Century (Norman, Oklahoma 1963), pp.140-159.

in Greek, but attendant clergy translated his words into Syriac and Latin for those who did not understand Greek.¹ But by the start of the sixth century, Sabas and Theodosius were making no provision for Syriac speakers in the worship of their monasteries, even though Armenian and Bessan were used.² Some time after the death of Sabas, the custom became established that no Syrian should be allowed to become superior in the Sabaite monasteries.³ The growing support for the Council of Chalcedon coincided with a decline in the use of the Syriac language in the Palestinian Church. This twofold trend confirms the association between Monophysitism and Syriac speaking communities and the decline in the influence of both in Palestine.

The two national groups referred to by Cyril both played a part in the doctrinal conflict over Chalcedon. The Bessans were a significant group in the Palestinian desert. In addition to the community within the monastery of Theodosius, members of this Thracian tribe, had also established a monastery in the region of the Jordan, probably near to the Laura of Calamon.⁴ A group of Bessans came to Jerusalem to offer support to the beleaguered monks of the Great Laura when they were suffering from the attacks of Nonnus and the Origenists. Their vigorous intervention is said by Cyril to have ended the violence directed against the Sabaites in the streets of Jerusalem.⁵ They are presented as allies of Sabas, an image presumably created by their conduct in the Monophysite conflict as well as that over Origenism.

The Armenians, by contrast, tended towards Monophysitism. Their presence in the Great Laura led to the introduction of a Monophysite liturgical formula, Peter the Fuller's addition to the Trishagion of the words "who was crucified for us".⁶ This slogan,

1. Itin Aeth 47.1-4 (SC p.314).

2. For example, Theodore of Petra V Thds 45.5-18.

3. See E.Kurtz, 'Review of A.Dmitrijevskij, Die Klosterregeln des hl. Sabas (Kiev 1890)', ByZ 3(1894)167-170).

4. John Moschus, Prat 157 (PG 87.3:3025B-C).

5. 193.24-194.12.

6. 118.1-4.

inserted into the liturgy, "transformait chaque service divine en manifestation du parti monophysite et par là donnait constamment occasion aux combats les plus acharnés".¹ Such a deviation from tradition was quickly suppressed by Sabas, who demanded that the hymn should be sung in Greek to ensure adherence to ancient tradition. Presumably the Armenian Monophysites had been taking advantage of the ignorance of Armenian in the monastery to introduce this novelty.²

Although the formula "who was crucified for us" did not enter into liturgical use in Armenia until the mid sixth century, the Armenian Church had come under the influence of Cyrilline Christology.³ Among the significant documents in the history of the Armenian Church, was a letter from Acacius of Melitene, Euthymius' old teacher, warning against the teachings of Nestorius and Theodore of Mopsuestia, and the Tome of Proclus, the Patriarch of Constantinople, which set out the principles of Cyril of Alexandria's Christology.⁴ The authority of these documents was not shaken by the Council of Chalcedon, at which there were no representatives from Armenia.

Although contact between Armenia and Palestine led to the introduction of Monophysite opinions into the desert, the long-term result was the export of Chalcedonianism. Patriarch John of Jerusalem was in close contact with Eastern Armenia and Georgia, and encouraged them to favour the doctrinal views of Chalcedon.⁵

Euthymius was born in Melitene, the capital of Roman Armenia, and was educated by Acacius and Synodius, who were to become

1. E.Stein, Histoire du Bas-Empire, Vol 1 (Bruges 1959) p.355.
2. 118. 4-5.
3. See V.Inglisian, 'Chalkedon und die armenische Kirche' in Das Konzil von Chalkedon, ed Grillmeier, Bacht, Vol II (Würzburg 1951-1954) pp.361-417 (p.372).
4. Inglisian, 'Chalkedon und die armenische Kirche', p.362; and Frend, Rise of the Monophysite Movement, pp.311-312.
5. Inglisian, 'Chalkedon und die armenische Kirche', p.373.

successive Metropolitans of Melitene.¹ The date of Acacius' elevation to the episcopate was before 431 and that of Synodius about 448.² Acacius played an important part at the Council of Ephesus in 431. He was a member of the delegation sent by the Cyrillian party to the Emperor Theodosius, another member of which was Juvenal of Jerusalem.³ He remained a firm supporter of the decisions of the Council until his death in 448, complaining to Cyril that the Formulary of Re-union had introduced a novel definition of faith and that its language about "a union of two natures" opened the way to the Nestorian doctrine of two sons.⁴ His watchfulness continued, and later he reported that in Euphratensis John of Germanica and others were preaching that in Christ the two natures operated "secunda semetipsum", and that this again introduced the doctrine of two sons.⁵

Euthymius had been informed about the issues in the conflict with Nestorianism by Synodius, who visited the Holy Places, and instructed Peter, Bishop of the Camp of Tents and delegate to the Council of Ephesus, to give support to Cyril of Alexandria and to Acacius of Melitene because of their reputation for orthodoxy.⁶ According to Cyril's account, Euthymius stood alongside the Monophysites at the Council of Ephesus and yet, twenty years later, had become the focus of Chalcedonian opposition to the party he had previously supported.⁷ While a sudden volte-face during doctrinal controversy was not unknown - as Cyrillian associates of Juvenal discovered at Chalcedon - Euthymius' change of heart requires an explanation.

The words with which Euthymius is reported to have defended the Council of Chalcedon are derived from the written records of

1. 11. 14-15.

2. See R.Génier, La vie de S. Euthyme le Grand (Paris 1909)p.60.

3. See R.V.Sellers, Council of Chalcedon (London 1961) p.13.

4. Cyril, ad Acacium Ep 40 (PG 77. 184B) also in ACO 1.1.4, pp.20-31. In this letter Cyril tries to reassure Acacius.

5. See Sellers, Council of Chalcedon, p.24.

6. 32. 6-19; 33. 2-6.

7. 44.15-44. 5.

the Council rather than a recollection of the saint's actual speech.¹ Yet, in spite of this derivation, the basis of Cyril's account is historically plausible. Auxolaus, Peter's successor as Bishop of the Camp of Tents, incurred Euthymius' wrath for having supported Dioscorus at the 'Latrocinium' of Ephesus, an outcome which, according to Cyril, caused him such distress that he died.² In the two years between this Council and that of Chalcedon the Palestinian Bishops, along with those from Egypt and Thrace, continued to support Dioscorus, but those from Pontus, Asia and Syria declared their support for the memory of Flavian, according to the account of the pro-Chalcedonian Liberatus.³ If Euthymius was continuing to look north and east for his theological influence, this could account for his irritation with Auxolaus and his emerging alienation from the Palestinian bishops.

After the Council of Chalcedon, Stephen, Bishop of Jamnia, and John, Bishop of the Camp of Tents, hurried to tell Euthymius about the decisions of Chalcedon.⁴ They would have emphasised that the Bishops had declared that the teaching of Leo and Flavian was in agreement with that of Cyril. "Cyril and Leo taught alike" was one of the acclamations of the Council.⁵ Euthymius was persuaded that the Council's definition harmonised with his measure of orthodoxy, Cyril of Alexandria. But other monks found the alternative account given by the usurper Theodosius to be more persuasive, especially as he had the support of Eudocia.⁶ The absence of a close relationship between the saint and the Patriarch of Jerusalem makes it more likely that the views of Euthymius should be out of step with those of the majority of the Church at Jerusalem.⁷

1. Compare 43.9-11. with ACO 2.1 p.325.31; and 43.24-25 ACO 2.1 p.325.30. Although Cyril does tell us that Euthymius studied the Chalcedonian Definition before giving his verdict (41.13-19).
2. 41.12-13.
3. Liberatus, Breviarium 13.76 (ACO 2.5 p.119).
4. 41.12-13.
5. ACO 2.1.1 p.81 and 2.1.2 p.124.
6. 41.22-25.
7. See above pp.173-175.

Euthymius might also have been encouraged in his opposition to Theodosius because of the usurper's visit to Alexandria in 448 when he accused Domnus of Antioch, one of Euthymius' monks, to Dioscorus of the crime of heresy.¹

In spite of the stand of Euthymius, the decisions of the Council of Chalcedon were overwhelmingly rejected in Jerusalem. The vast majority of the monks, with the powerful backing of Eudocia, flocked to Theodosius' support and consecrated him Patriarch of Jerusalem. Some have suggested that Eutyches assisted in building up this opposition to Chalcedon.² Euthymius and other supporters of Chalcedon fled to the depths of the desert.³ But within twenty months Juvenal was back, with a band of imperial soldiers and, according to some accounts, Samaritans in support.⁴ It seemed that Palestine's brief flirtation with Monophysitism was at an end. Theodosius left the country, Romanus was arrested, Monophysite Bishops were ejected.⁵

The return of Juvenal should not be equated with the triumph of Chalcedon. For many Eastern Christians the Council had little relevance and they took little notice of it. The comment of Grillmeier that "theology retreated behind ecclesiastical politics" as the emperors searched for a formula to achieve unity applies to much of the history of the seventy years that followed the Council.⁶ It was not until 518, when the Emperor Justin I acceded

1. J.Flemming (ed), Akten der ephesischen Synode vom Jahre 449 cited in H.Bacht, 'Die Rolle des orientalischen Monchtums', (p.245).
2. For this suggestion see A.Grillmeier, 'Eine Flucht des Eutychew nach Jerusalem', in Romanitas-Christianitas, ed G.Wirth (Berlin-New York 1982) pp.645-653.
3. 44. 24-45. 4.
4. Zachariah of Mitylene, HE 3.5-6 describes combined forces of Romans and Samaritans slaughtering defenceless monks at the command of Juvenal. Evagrius, not committed to the Monophysite cause, reports violence on both sides (HE 2.5 ed Bidez, p.52.10-17).
5. De obitu Theodosii 21.7-9. Compare John Rufus, Plerophoria 26 (PO 62.11-12).
6. Grillmeier, Christ in Christian Tradition, p.93, 236.

to the throne that the Council of Chalcedon was formally recognised alongside the Councils of Nicaea, Constantinople and Ephesus.¹ In Palestine several stages in the slow victory of Chalcedon can be usefully distinguished.

The first stage was the establishment of a Chalcedonian hierarchy. After the return of Juvenal, Monophysite Bishops were forced to leave the country. Even Peter the Iberian, Bishop of Maiuma in the south-west of Palestine and so at a safe distance from Jerusalem, decided to share the fate of his fellow bishops and departed to Egypt.² An important defection from the Monophysite cause was that of Eudocia who suffered the personal misfortune of the capture of her daughter and grand-daughters by the Vandal King Gaiseric. She interpreted this, with the encouragement of Simeon Stylites and Euthymius, as a sign of divine displeasure for her supporting of heretics. In 456, she returned into communion with Juvenal, bringing with her a large number of laypeople and monks, including the Archimandrite Elpidius.³

At this stage, opposition to the Council of Chalcedon, personified by the hated Patriarch Juvenal, remained strong. Monasteries provided a focus for resistance. Gerontius, the superior of the monastery of Melania on the Mount of Olives, refused to accept the authority of Juvenal. "God forbid that I should see the face of Judas the traitor", he exclaimed; and many shared this opinion.⁴ Marcianus left the monastery of Elpidius, after the latter's defection, and founded his own coenobium at Bethlehem. This grew in both size and influence, so that Marcianus was later appointed archimandrite of the monks of the Judaen desert.⁵ Romanus founded a monastery at Thekoa,

1. 162.10-18. Cyril incorrectly states that the Council was restored to the diptychs, whereas it was the supporters of the Council, Euphemius and Macedonius of Constantinople, whose names were restored, thus recognising the Council.
2. De obitu Theodosii 21.4-13; R.Raabe, Petrus der Iberer, p.58.
3. 47.5-49.13.
4. 49.8-10; Raabe, Petrus der Iberer, p.28.
5. 49.11-12; 66.24-26; 115.12-14.

which became a centre of resistance to Chalcedon. This community numbered six hundred monks, according to John Rufus, and was a source of support to the enemies of Juvenal throughout Palestine and Arabia. Later Romanus left Thekoa and founded a new monastery at Eleutheropolis, a move which took him further away from Jerusalem and nearer to the Monophysite areas of strength on the coast. The land for the monastery was donated by Eudocia, whose reconciliation with Juvenal did not prevent her patronising his opponents.¹ The size and prestige of these monasteries suggests that the theology of the monks remained conservative and the grip of Juvenal on their loyalty remained weak. The Bishops supported Chalcedon and the monks opposed it.

The next stage was the gradual integration of the monks into the Jerusalem Church. This was achieved, however, by a weakening of episcopal support for Chalcedon rather than by a relaxation of conservative monastic convictions. In 479 Marcianus led the majority of Monophysite monks into communion with the Patriarch Martyrius. There are two versions of this event. Cyril describes the final submission of the Aposchist rebels to the orthodox Church as being the result of a sign of divine approval for this course of action. Marcianus summoned the monks, cast lots and then formally re-united with the Patriarch. It was at this point that Gerontius and Romanus, presented as hard-line Monophysites, retired to Eleutheropolis.² So, for Cyril, the event is a triumphant vindication of Chalcedon. But Zachariah of Mitylene gives an alternative explanation. Marcianus' re-union was, according to him, the result of a declaration by Martyrius that the common faith into which all are baptised was that

1. 49.10-13; John Rufus, Plerophoria 25 (PO p.58). Cyril dates this event to 479, but an alternative account of the move to Eleutheropolis from Thekoa makes it take place well before the death of Juvenal. See de obitu Theodosii 26.10-23. Cyril's date has the virtue of providing an explanation for a move away from the capital which would otherwise be hard to account for.
2. 66.21-67.20.

proclaimed at Nicaea and that all innovations introduced at "Arminium, Sarica, Chalcedon or any other place" were anathematised.¹ This solution was adopted by Zeno's Henoticon three years later. It solved the problem of Chalcedon by ignoring it. It was as though the Council of Chalcedon had not happened.

As in Egypt, this concession was not enough to win over all Monophysites. Determined opponents of the Jerusalem Patriarchate dispersed to the coastal regions. The Life of Peter the Iberian describes Peter visiting and encouraging Monophysite communities in his travels between Gaza and Phoenicia. Among these were monasteries and groups of laypeople at Ascalon, Thavatha, Jamnia, Ptolemais, Caesarea and Afthoria.² This solid base in commercial and intellectual centres encouraged a number of educated Greek-speakers who were to become influential authors and leaders, including Severus of Antioch, Zacharias of Mitylene and John Rufus.³ Cyril claims some secessions from this group to the Jerusalem Patriarchate, such as the reconciliation of Mamas, a Monophysite archimandrite at Eleutheropolis, through the efforts of Sabas.⁴

The third and final stage of the conflict was brief. The Emperor Justin came to the throne in 518 and declared his support for the Council of Chalcedon. The Church in Palestine accepted this decision and the remaining Monophysite communities at Gaza and Ascalon joined the majority.⁵ A small number of Monophysites fled to Egypt under the leadership of Susanna, a nun, and settled in the monastery of Mar Menas, south of Alexandria.⁶ Palestine could be said to be Chalcedonian.

1. Zacharias of Mitylene, HE 3.5; reproduced in Kyrrillos, pp.367-368. It is not surprising that the Chalcedonian Cyril should have altered this embarrassing declaration.
2. Raabe, Petrus der Iberer, pp.96,111,112.
3. See Chitty, Desert a City, pp.103-105, for a brief account of this group.
4. 147.3.
5. 162.10-18.
6. L.Perrone, La Chiesa di Palestina e le Controversie Christologiche (Brescia 1980) pp.186-187.

7:4. Authority and Origenism.

The Life of Sabas portrays the saint as a heroic upholder of orthodoxy, locked in combat with two heretical groups - the Monophysites and the Origenists. During Sabas' lifetime the power base of the Monophysites had been established in Syria under the leadership of Severus of Antioch (who was Patriarch of Antioch from 512 to 518) and Philoxenus of Mabboug (who was bishop from 485 to 518). The Monophysites were therefore seen as enemies from outside, threatening the Patriarchs with deposition.¹ Faced with this attack the monks of Palestine closed their ranks and demonstrated their strength with a huge display of solidarity with their archimandrites and support for Chalcedon.² The conflict with Monophysitism at the time of Sabas had the effect of uniting the monastic population of the Judaeen desert.

The growth of Origenism presented a very different threat. As far as Sabas and his successors were concerned, it was a movement within the monasteries of Judaea.³ It led to division in the desert and physical fighting in the streets of Jerusalem.⁴ Cyril traces the origins of the movement back to the earliest stages of the history of the Great Laura. From modest beginnings, the number of dissidents gradually increased until they gained the favour and patronage of the imperial court. From the start they challenged the authority of Sabas who was either unwilling or unable to integrate them into the community. If Monophysitism was an attack from without - then Origenism was an insurrection from within.

Sabas' achievement was the founding of monasteries.⁵ He made provision for the continuing leadership of his foundations through the appointment of capable leaders. The list of the names of the

1. 141.5; 144.1-10; 150.1-2; 158.7.

2. At the mass-gathering at the convent of St Stephen, 151.9-152.6.

3. Of course Origenism flourished in other areas, but the present discussion is concerned with the Palestinian desert. For Origenism in Syria, see A.Guillaumont, Les 'Kephalia Gnostica' d'Evagre le Pontique, pp.173-200.

4. 188.15-26; 193.19-194.12.

5. 158.12-159.3.

superiors of the monasteries is a regular conclusion to the description of the foundation. After he had founded Castellion, Sabas "appointed an old anchorite Paul, with his disciple Theodore, as steward (διοικητὴν) of the place". After Paul's death, Theodore succeeded him, followed by his brother, Sergius, and his uncle, Paul, both of whom had come from Melitene.¹ The accounts of Sabas' other foundations follow a similar pattern.²

The importance of wise appointments to positions of responsibility is emphasised by other monastic texts. Pachomius developed the custom of dividing the monks of his monasteries into groups under the direction of "housemasters and seconds (οἰκιακούς καὶ δευτέρους)". At Phbow, for example, "he appointed a steward with some seconds to minister to the brothers, as well as housemasters with seconds according to the rules of the monastery at Tabennisi".³ Further appointments became necessary in the Pachomian monasteries as the institution grew in size and complexity. Paphnouti was appointed as 'great steward' to take care of the administration of all the monasteries".⁴ P. Rousseau commented that in the Pachomian monasteries "colonisation was more in evidence than legislation; what mattered most was the appointment of the right kind of leader, rather than the publication of the right kind of rule".⁵ This judgment applies equally to Palestine.

Cyril attributes the introduction of Origenism into the New Laura to bad leadership. Nonnus and three companions who 'secretly held the dogmas of Origen' were admitted into the Laura by the 'simple' Paul who had not been aware of their true allegiance.⁶

1. 112.21-25.

2. For example, 126.20-127.3; 128.16-22; 130.19-23.

3. The only passage which refers to seconds assisting stewards is VPach Gl 54 (Athanassakis, 80.7-8). The Bohairic Life omits reference to stewards, mentioning only housemasters and seconds (VPach Bo¹ 49). The Coptic tradition may present the original practice in Pachomius' houses.

4. VPach Bo¹ 60.

5. Rousseau, Pachomius, p.73.

6. 124.20-29. Paul's unsuitability for the post of superior was demonstrated by his flight into Arabia only six months after his appointment.

His successor, Agapetus, arranged for the Origenists' expulsion, after discussion with the Patriarch Elias, but after Agapetus' death Nonnus and his companions persuaded the new superior, Mamas, to admit them once again.¹ They kept their opinions to themselves during the lifetime of Sabas, but, when he died, they spread their opinions to other monasteries of the desert. They found a receptive audience in the communities of Martyrius and Firminus, where the monks were suffering from a period of weak leadership after the deaths of vigorous superiors who had been sharers in the struggles of Sabas.²

A weak leader gave an opportunity to the Origenists, but the reasons for the spread of Origenism, once established, lay within the monastic society itself. Sabas had received a basic education to equip him for life as a monk but he was no intellectual and showed himself to be unsympathetic to academic study. The absence of a tradition of scholarship in the Sabaite monasteries was frustrating to the more intellectual monks and made the speculative theology of Origenism attractive.

In his suspicion of academic study, Sabas could claim the support of the old traditions of desert monasticism. The force which drove the first monks into the desert was a determination to struggle against evil. The ascetic life was a life of action. "La spiritualité est une science pratique. Il faut ajouter: la pratique a précédé la science, au sens technique du mot".³ As well as sharing the peasant's preference for hard work, the monks feared that too much study could lead them to lose humility and draw towards heretical opinions.⁴

1. 124.19-125.3; 125.15-20.

2. 188.19-22.

3. I. Hausherr, 'Les grands courants de la spiritualité orientale', *OrChrP* 1(1935)114-138 (p.116). Evagrius Ponticus described the three stages of the religious life as *πρακτική*, *θεωρητική* and *γνωστική*.

4. The commitment to hard labour is shown by the remark of Dorotheus when Palladius remonstrated with him for the hard treatment to which he subjected his body. "It kills me, I kill it". See Palladius, *HLaus* 2.2 (Butler, p.17.6-7). For fear of heresy. see I. Hausherr, *Penthes*, (Kalamazoo, Michigan, 1982) pp.108-118.

The simplicity of the early monks was praised. Sozomen and Athanasius apply the same phrase to Or and Antony respectively. They say that they "knew no letters" (γράφματα μὴ μαθών).¹ But since Athanasius presents Antony as delivering long discourses to his monks and Sozomen says that Or has the gift of memory so that "everything he received with his mind was never afterwards forgotten", the passages imply a refusal to rely on human scholarship rather than a cultivation of ignorance.

Some monks were highly educated. Hilarion, for example, is said by Jerome to have been famous for his knowledge of Scripture and grasp of academic studies, although this passage may reflect Jerome's opinion of himself rather than the actual abilities of Hilarion.² Cyril of Alexandria is also said to have been an able student during his five years at the monastery. He "read the books of the Old and New Testaments, for Theophilus encouraged him to apply himself assiduously to this study...It was enough for him to read a book once for him to know it by heart; also until the end of his stay in the desert, he knew all the canonical books by memory".³ But, however well educated the early monks were, they retained respect for the simple endurance of the peasant monks. Arsenius was asked why he consulted a peasant about his thoughts when he was educated in Greek and Latin. He responded; "I have indeed been taught Latin and Greek, but I do not know even the alphabet of this peasant".⁴

The changing value given to study within the monastery is shown by the development of the use of the word ἀγροίκος or rustic from being a compliment to an insult. In the Apophthegm attributed to Arsenius it is used in the context of the personal initiative and hard

1. Sozomen, HE 6.28. (GCS, 277.7).
2. Jerome, VHilarionis 2. in W.A.Oldfather, Studies in the Text Tradition of St Jerome's Vitae Patrum (Urbana 1943) p.313.
3. Severus of Ashmunein, History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria in PO 1.427-8. Cited by F-M.Abel, 'Saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie dans ses rapports avec la Palestine', in Kyrilliana, Spicilegia edita Sancti Cyrilli Alexandrini XV recurrente saeculo (Cairo 1947) pp.203-270 (pp.211-212).
4. ApophPatr Arsenius 5 (PG 65.89A).

labour of the peasant ascetic.¹ But, as monasticism became more institutionalised, the word came to be used in a derogatory sense. The accusation of being 'rustic' implied ignorance and unsuitability for positions of authority. So the Chalcedonian historian, Theophanes, described Dioscorus as "completely uneducated and rustic (ἄγριος)".² The context of this statement is Dioscorus' acceptance of heresy.³ The 'intellectual' opponents of Sabas did not accuse him of heresy, but claim that his lack of education made him unable to govern a large monastic community. They said: "He is unsuited to the oversight of the place because of his great rusticity (διὰ τὴν πολλὴν ἀγροικότητα αὐτοῦ)".⁴

It was inevitable that, as the monastic communities grew, the initial insight and impetus provided by the founder should become diluted and dissolved. Instead of the close contact with the abba, monks were formed by discussion and regulated by the guidance found in the written texts. It is suggested that the core of the Life of Pachomius was committed to writing during the period of Theodore's leadership when memory of the founder was becoming faint. This anxiety about the loss of the tradition is expressed by Theodore in his words to the brothers. "Pay attention to the words I am speaking to you, because a time is coming when you will not be able to find anyone to recount them to you".⁵ Previously unlearned monks suddenly became able to read and recite the Scriptures when they were called to lead monasteries.⁶ Peter the Iberian's final words to his monks on his death-bed was a command to persevere in study.⁷ Leaders of monasteries were coming to realise the

1. See P. Rousseau, Ascetics, Authority and the Church (Oxford 1978) p.26.
2. Theophanes, Chronographia (ed. de Boor, p.97).
3. Compare Hausherr, Penthos, pp.158-159.
4. 103.25-26.
5. VPach Bo¹ 196. See also A. Veilleux, Pachomian Koinonia Vol 1 Cistercian Studies 45, (Kalamazoo, Michigan 1980) p.243,293.
6. See Rousseau, Ascetics, Authority and the Church, pp.68-76.
7. R. Raabe, Petrus der Iberer, p.124.

importance of written texts for the maintenance of a cohesive and orthodox monastic life.

A vigorous monastic society needed to be based on a sound intellectual and theological base. Had Sabas tried to follow the pattern of life set by Euthymius, Antony and the early Egyptian monks and avoided human company, then his anti-intellectualism would have been appropriate. But this was not his purpose. Instead he set out to establish a new form of monastic society. In accepting these responsibilities, his lack of an intellectual background was a handicap. His own education had taken place entirely within the monastery of Flaviana, which he entered at the age of eight.¹ There he had learnt the Psalter and the rest of the coenobitic rule (τὴν λοιπὴν τοῦ κοινοβιακοῦ κανόνος κατέστασιν).² Later he was to arrange for novices at his own monastery to have a similar training. The purpose of the period of noviciate at his coenobia was that "they should learn the Psalter and the canon of Psalmody (τὸν τῆς ψαλμωδίας κανόνα) and be educated in monastic discipline (τὴν μοναχικὴν... ἀκρίβειαν)".³ There is not a word here, or elsewhere in the Life of the need for knowledge of the whole Bible and certainly not of later theological writing. It seems that the monk was required to be sufficiently well-acquainted with the Bible to enable him to participate in the week-end worship of the laura, but no more.

A very different emphasis is presented by the monastic formation in the Pachomian monasteries. Pachomius preferred to free new monks from physical labour so that they could concentrate on learning, not only the Psalter, but other parts of the Bible as well. Pachomius himself worked hard to understand and assimilate the teachings of the Bible, and to pass these on to the monks.⁴ "Abba Pachomius often used to speak the word of God to them (the monks) Some who loved him dearly wrote down many interpretations of the Scriptures they had heard from him".⁵ There were regular periods

1. We are told that Sabas travelled to Jerusalem at the age of eighteen, having spent ten years in the monastery. See 90.6, 19.
2. 88.1.
3. 113.9-10. Compare 113.16-20.
4. VPach G¹ 9,24 (Athanassakis, 14.1-11, 38.3-4).
5. VPach G¹ 99 (Athanassakis, 140.3-5).

of instruction in the monasteries founded by him. According to one source, the housemaster was required to give three instructions to the monks, one on Saturday and two on Sunday; and the second should offer similar instruction on the two fast-days.¹ A familiar scene in the Pachomian monasteries was the brothers assembled at the end of the day's work and seated under a palm tree discussing the meaning of passages of Scripture.²

As a result of the comparison between the formation of new monks in Sabas' and Pachomius' monasteries, it comes as no surprise to discover tension developing between Sabas and those monks who valued study. Similar conflict is recorded in other monastic sources. Hypatius, for example, criticised those who indulged in theological speculation. "Truly, I am shocked at the impiety of those who...form an opinion about what is incomprehensible (τὰ ἀκατάληπτα ὁ οἰομένων)".³ It seems also that the disagreement between Martin and Brice, reported by Sulpicius Severus, was rooted in the difference between their cultural background. Brice accused Martin of having been a soldier, while he, Sulpicius notes, owned slaves.⁴

In the monastery of Sabas, conflict was immediate, bitter and continuous. The first episode which Cyril describes after the foundation of the monastery is the deputation of monks to the Patriarch complaining about Sabas.⁵ They are described as having a 'fleshly judgement' (τινὲς σαρκικοὶ τῷ φρονήματι) and they told

1. VPach G¹ 28 (Athanassakis pp.34-36).

2. On the tradition of study in the Pachomian houses, see Rousseau, Pachomius, pp.85-86, and P.Ladeuze, Etude sur le cénobitisme pachomien pendant le IV^e siècle et la première moitié du Ve siècle (Louvain and Paris 1898, edn Frankfurt 1961) pp.290-294.

3. VHypatii 114.20-22. Compare VDanStyl 84.14-85.22. For comment on these passages, see MO 1, pp.77-79.

4. Sulpicius Severus, Dialogues 3.15 (PL 20:220D-221A). J.Fontaine (ed. Sulpice Severe, Vie de S. Martin, SC 133 (Paris 1967) p.155) describes the conflict as "tension accrue par les incompatibilités de mentalités entre un vieux légionnaire et des jeunes lettrés".

5. 101.6-103.7.

the Patriarch that Sabas was "unfit to govern the place because of his great rusticity" (διὰ τὴν πολλὴν ἀγροικότητα αὐτοῦ).¹ This complaint seems to have been simmering for some time as the delegation had waited until after Sallustius had been consecrated Patriarch. Presumably, the objectors hoped that the new Patriarch would be more sympathetic to their case than his predecessor, Martyrius, who had been a member of Euthymius' community.² However, the response of the new Patriarch was to confirm Sabas' position as Superior by ordaining him priest.³

The group continued to oppose Sabas during the next twenty years. By 501, when the new church of the Theotokos was dedicated, their number had increased to forty and Sabas was obliged to leave the monastery.⁴ After a short absence he returned, but discovered that his position had weakened further and that the group opposed to him now numbered sixty.⁵ Again he left the monastery and did not return until he was strengthened by a firm letter from Patriarch Elias confirming his position as superior.⁶ The problem was only resolved when the opponents, after a display of violence, left the Great Laura and, after travelling south, settled in some cells not far from the deserted monastery of Romanus near Thekoa.⁷

Cyril demonstrates the continuity between this group and the well-organised Origenist party which extended its influence as far as Constantinople. Among the four Origenist monks admitted into the New Laura by Paul the Simple were Nonnus and Leontius of Byzantium.⁸ After the death of Sabas, these monks extended their influence and gained the support of "all the more intellectual monks of the New

1. 103.25-26.

2. 51.3-21.

3. 104.13-18.

4. 117.18-19; 118.24-30.

5. 120.13-15.

6. 122.19-20.

7. 122.21-123.8. A recent survey by Y.Hirschfeld discovered a coenobium three kilometres to the west of the New Laura, which he suggests is the remains of Romanus' monastery. The survey is as yet unpublished.

8. 124.25; 176.12-13.

Laura" (πάντας τοὺς ἐν τῇ Νέᾳ Λαύρᾳ λογιστέους).¹ Their influence extended even into the Great Laura.² The leader of the Origenists in the New Laura, Theodore Askidas, sailed to Constantinople with Domitian, superior of the monastery of Martyrius. There he joined forces with Leontius of Byzantium and, with the help of the court favourite, Papas Eusebius, gained access to the Emperor.³ The roots of the Origenist party, with its leadership influential in the capital, are thus shown to lie in the tensions present from the foundation of Sabas' first community.

To this long drawn-out narrative of conflict and opposition should be compared the shorter episode of the monk Jacob. During one of Sabas' absences, Jacob led a small separatist group of monks from the Great Laura and built a new laura close to the Great Laura. His foundation consisted of a small oratory and some cells, and was situated close to the cistern used by the monks of the Great Laura. On his return, Sabas rebuked Jacob who was seized by a fit of shivering and a fever, from which Sabas cured him. The intended laura was then properly constituted under Sabas' authority and two monks were appointed as stewards.⁴

The problem in both cases was one of authority. Sabas' non-intellectual background, neglect of a teaching ministry and remoteness from the day-to-day management of the life of the laura made the monastery vulnerable to division and rivalry. The secession of Jacob was easily dealt with, but the discontent of the intellectuals was a deeply rooted tension which Sabas was never able to resolve. The intellectuals were a community within the community.

The identity and nature of this community will be examined with reference to its leaders and to its theological teachings.

1. 188.18-19.

2. 188.23.

3. 188.24-189.3.

4. 129.2-130.21.

The leaders of the Origenist movement in the sixth century in Palestine were Nonnus and Leontius of Byzantium. The fortunes of the group followed the fluctuations in the power of these dominant personalities.

Nonnus is said by Cyril to have been responsible for the development of the opposition group from being 'fleshly' or motivated 'by a perverse devil' into the upholders of a distinctively Origenist theology.¹ He introduced Origenism into the New Laura, presumably because he was a teacher around whom dissident monks grouped themselves.² After Sabas' death, it was the initiative of Nonnus which led to the consolidation and expansion of this group, which infiltrated other monasteries of the desert. As his power increased, his faction tried to achieve the removal of the name of Ephraim, Patriarch of Antioch, from the diptychs and to make the streets of Jerusalem unsafe for opponents from the Great Laura.³ Origenist power reached its height when they imposed their own candidate for the post of superior on the Great Laura through force of arms.⁴ Cyril attributes the decline of the party and its fragmentation into opposing factions, one of which was reconciled to the orthodox of the Great Laura, to the death of Nonnus, which was seen as a result of the guiding providence of God.⁵ The fortunes of the Origenists depended on the firm leadership of Nonnus. When that was removed, the group disintegrated. He was a co-ordinator, holding no recognised official post but acknowledged as the leader by Origenists in different monasteries.

The other important figure is Leontius of Byzantium. Leontius was a companion of Nonnus and entered the New Laura with him.⁶ He accompanied Sabas on his delegation to the court of the Emperor Justinian and remained at Constantinople after his Origenist sympathies were discovered by Sabas, who dismissed him from the party.⁷ In the

1. They were ἀρετικοὶ and ἐκ τινος σκαίου δαίμονος . 103.13; 118.27.

2. 124.27-125.1.

3. 191.20-25; 193.19-21.

4. 195.16-20.

5. 195.25-196.2; 197.7-198.6.

6. 125.17-18.

7. 176.10-15.

capital. he represented the Origenists gaining the confidence both of the Emperor and of the Papas Eusebius.¹ Through his influence leading Origenists- Theodore Askidas of the New Laura and Domitian superior of the monastery of Martyrius - were appointed to important posts in the Church. Theodore became Metropolitan of Caesarea in Cappadocia and Domitian became Metropolitan of Ancyra.² Leontius died at about the time when Justinian published his 543 Edict against Origen.³

A number of historical problems surround the figure of Leontius. For many of the events and personalities in the Origenist controversy Cyril is the only contemporary source. but for Leontius there is a mass of confusing evidence. The sources for the period present us with no less than four figures named Leontius. The first of these is Leontius of Byzantium. the Origenist and opponent of Sabas. whose career, described by Cyril. has been briefly outlined. There is also Leontius the Hermit, author of a number of philosophical and theological treatises. Then we know of a monk Leontius who took part in disputations between Monophysites and Chalcedonians in 532 and was present at the five sittings of the 536 Synod at Constantinople And one of John Maxentius' Scythian monks was called Leontius The question which concerns us here is whether these four figures are four separate individuals or whether they are the same Leontius ubiquitously appearing in several contexts.

The last can be dismissed most easily. The Scythian monk has been identified both with Cyril's Leontius and with Leontius the Hermit the author.⁴ The first of these identifications rests on the misunderstanding that the 'Scytharum monachi' of John Maxentius are monks of Scythopolis and included both Leontius of Byzantium and Cyril of Scythopolis Clearly this view is rendered impossible by Cyril's account. The second identification is also unlikely. A Scythian Leontius would have been more sympathetic to Monophysitism

1. 189.1-3; 191.1-11.

2. 188.24-189.7.

3. 192.21-22.

4. For the identification with Cyril's Leontius. see R.V.Sellers. The Council of Chalcedon (London 1961) p.305; and with Leontius the Hermit E.R.Hardy. Christology of the Later Fathers (London 1964) p.375.

and would have been more likely to write in Latin. The Scythian monk can quickly be dismissed from the discussion.

The assessment of Leontius the Hermit is more complex and controversial. An extensive corpus of works is attributed to Leontius. They include Tres Libri contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos. Solutio argumentorum a Severo objectorum. Capita triginta contra Severum. Adversus fraudes Apollinistarum. Contra Monophysitas and Contra Nestorianos. It is generally agreed that the last two of these works should be assigned to a different Leontius on grounds of literary style, historical reference (they refer, for example, to Jacob Baradeus who was active between 580 and 600) and dogmatic content.¹ Fortunately, this new Leontius need not concern us. He is referred to as Leontius of Jerusalem and wrote later than the period we are considering.

The identification of Leontius the Hermit with Cyril's Leontius is supported by an autobiographical reference in Contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos in which the authour writes of his youthful flirtation with the School of Antioch and his subsequent salvation in Palestine "at the hands of wise and pious men".² He also states that the book contains the substance of several lectures which he had frequently delivered.³ The disputations with Monophysites in the Basilica described by Cyril as taking place during Sabas' second visit to to Constantinople provides an occasion when these lectures could have taken place.⁴

1. See M.Richard, 'Léonce de Byzance. était-il origéniste?' REByz 5(1947)31-66; and 'Léonce de Jérusalem et Léonce de Byzance'. MSR 1(1944)35-88. The same author argues that the treatise De Sectis cannot be attributed to Leontius. in M.Richard, 'Le traité De Sectis et Léonce de Byzance'. RHE 35(1939)695-723. Some authors have argued for the unity of authorship of the Leontian corpus. including S.Rees, 'The Literary Activity of Leontius of Byzantium'. JThS NS 19 (1968)229-242.
2. Contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos 3 prol (PG 86: 1357C-1360B).
3. Contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos 1 prol (PG 86: 1268C).
4. 176.8-9.

Against this circumstantial evidence is the unfortunate fact that not only do Leontius' writings uphold a consistent Chalcedonian Christology, but also they include an attack on Origenism. He wrote: "They do not admire Origen, because the well-named and admirable Gregory, collecting together numberless objections, has directed a book against him".¹

Recent studies have examined the problem of Leontius' Origenism more closely.² Two preliminary indications suggest that Leontius might in fact have favoured Origenism. Firstly, the passage apparently attacking Origen could be construed as an ironical question and, if so, far from indicating disapproval of Origen's teaching, might be a sign of sympathy.³ Secondly, marginal notes have been inserted by an unknown scholiast into the codex of Leontius' works.⁴ In a section attacking Eutyches, Leontius wrote: "A pious and devout man has said these things well". The scholiast added the note: "περὶ τοῦ Ἀββᾶ Νόνου". Alongside a remark about "a certain man who went before us with wisdom from God" the scholiast has added "περὶ Ἐυαγγελίου".⁵ These marginal notes suggest that Leontius was known to have sympathised with Origenism.

M. Richard suggested that in the complex politics of the capital a situation could arise when an Origenist might well wish to conceal his sympathies with Origenist speculation.⁶ He establishes that Leontius is decidedly opposed both to Monophysitism (he can only just accept Cyril's formula *μία φύσις τοῦ Θεοῦ λόγου σεσαρκωμένη*) and to Nestorianism.⁷ He is writing against Chalcedonians who inclined to

1. Contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos (PG 86: 1377B-C).

2. These include David Beecher Evans, Leontius of Byzantium, an Origenist Christology, Dumbarton Oaks Studies 13 (Washington 1970) and B. Daley, 'The Origenism of Leontius of Byzantium', JThS NS 27(1976)333-369.

3. See F. Loofs, Leontius von Byzanz TU 3 (Leipzig 1887) p.294. But for an alternative view, see Kyrrillos, p.389.

4. This is Codex Vat. Gr. 2195.

5. See PG 86: 1273C, 1285A-B.

6. M. Richard, 'Léonce de Byzance, était-il origéniste?', (p. 63).

7. See PG 86: 1277.

error. Richard describes his position as that of "un chalcédonisme très stricte interprété à la lumière de la theologie cappadocienne et d'une philosophie originale".¹ An approach such as this could accomodate Origenism. As a possible context, Richard suggests the period following Justinian's 543 Edict against Origenism.² This edict was a set-back for the Origenists, and they participated in the attack on the Three Chapters in an attempt to draw attention away from themselves and to regain the Emperor's favour. Theodore of Mopsuestia, the author of the De allegoria et historia contra Origenem which attacked Origen, was a suitable target for Origenist animosity.³ A literary production of this kind would accord with the reaction of Theodore and Domitian, who signed the edict but persisted in their support of Origenism. Richard inclines against identifying Leontius the author with Cyril's Leontius since, according to Cyril, Leontius died at about the time of the publication of the 543 Edict.⁴ But it is possible to imagine other times when imperial opinion swung against Origenism as well as 543 which would provide a moment when a judicious Origenist might prefer to conceal some of his opinions.

Evans attempts to provide a stronger argument for Leontius' Origenism by demonstrating that Leontius develops his theology in an Origenist framework.⁵ He makes a detailed examination of two chapters of Book One of the Contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos, which discuss Leontius' classification of beings, the nature of the soul and the use of the soul/body union as a paradigm of the word/flesh union in Christ. He then considers Evagrius' theology and concludes that Leontius' soul occupies the same place in his anthropological scheme as does the nous in that of Evagrius. It follows that Leontius' Christology depends on an Evagrian sinless nous uniting to both word and flesh.⁶

1. Richard, 'Léonce de Byzance, était-il origéniste?', p.46.
2. For parallels between Contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos 3 and the 543 Edict, see Richard, 'Léonce de Byzance, était-il origéniste?', (pp.48-49).
3. Nonnus and his circle had vowed eternal hatred against this work, according to Facundus of Hermiane, Pro defensione trium Capitularum Concilii Chalcedonensis 3.6 (CCL, pp.93-103).
4. 192.21-22.
5. D.B.Evans, Leontius of Byzantium. A similar argument is in J.Meyendorff, Christ in Eastern Christian Thought (New York 1975) pp.47-68.
6. Evans, Leontius of Byzantium, pp.84-131.

Evans cannot be said to have established his case. B.Daley points to other passages in which Leontius contradicts important Origenist beliefs. These include reference to a creation which takes place within history; the Fall as a historical, rather than a cosmic, event; and the Logos uniting directly to the flesh in the Incarnation.¹ Daley concludes: "All the similarities Prof. Evans adduces between their conceptions of the spirit of man - the tripartite soul, the distinction between form and matter and of the four elements, the contrast between *οὐσία* and *ποιότης*, even the notion that soul and body are different natures - are all too much of a part of the mixed heritage of any sixth century Greek philosopher to be by themselves evidence of the dependence of one writer on another... The real drift of Evans' book...is to say: the Evagrian myth could be expressed without contradiction in Leontian terms".²

The conclusion that must be drawn from an examination of the content of Leontius' works is that it would have been possible for an Origenist in Nonnus' circle to have been the author. The identification of Cyril's Leontius and Leontius the Hermit is not ruled out; but nor is it established beyond doubt. In the absence of strong indication to the contrary, it should be assumed that the two Leontii are the same person.

A certain Leontius the Monk took part in discussions in Constantinople in 532 and in the synod of 536. In the 532 list he is described as "Leontius a venerable monk and apocrisarius of the fathers established in the holy city" (Leontio viro venerabili monacho atque apocrisario patrum in sancta civitate constitutorum).³ In the lists of the participants in the five sittings of the 536 Council, he is described as *Λέοντιος ἐλέει Θεοῦ μοναχὸς καὶ ἡγούμενος καὶ τοποτηρητὴς πάσης τῆς ἐρήμου*; as *Λεόντιος ἐλέει Θεοῦ μοναχὸς* (the Latin translation adds: "et prior proprii monasterii")

1. B.Daley, 'The Origenism of Leontius of Byzantium', *JThS* NS 27(1976)333-369. References to the passages in which Leontius contradicts Origenist positions on these issues are PG 86: 1284C, 1384B-D, 1369C.

2. Daley, 'The Origenism of Leontius of Byzantium', (pp.354-355).

3. *ACO* 4.2 p.170.5.

ποιούμενος τὸν λόγον ὑπὲρ τῶν κατὰ τὴν ἔρημον ἀγίων πατέρων;
 and as Λεόντιος ἡγούμενος καὶ μοναχὸς ἰδίου μοναστηρίου καὶ ὑπὲρ
 πάντων τῶν ἐν τῇ ἔρῃ καὶ Ἰορδανῇ ἀγίων πατέρων.¹

The objections to identifying this Leontius with Cyril's Leontius are that, while Cyril's Leontius is described as being in Constantinople during these discussions, he had been dismissed from the delegation by Sabas and so could not be described as an apocrisarius or τοποτηρητής (for whose representative was he?) nor as a superior (for he had left his own monastery).

Various answers to these problems have been given. The puzzle as to how Leontius could be an apocrisarius or τοποτηρητής has received two suggested solutions. Schwartz considers that he had been designated apocrisarius by Justinian himself. "Es bleibt kaum eine andere Vermutung übrig, als dass es der Kaiser selbst getan hat".² In support of this there is plenty of evidence in Cyril showing Leontius' influential position at court. An alternative suggestion is that of Loofs, who considers that Leontius was the representative of the Patriarch of Jerusalem. This suggestion supposes that Cyril has allowed his partisan position in the conflict to affect the accuracy of his presentation of the event. Instead of the delegation to Constantinople being led by Sabas with others accompanying him, we should suppose that Leontius played a more prominent role.³ Leontius' further sojourn in Constantinople, then, took place not because he was dismissed from the delegation by Sabas, but because he was continuing to represent the interests of the Patriarch - and his own Origenist party - at the Imperial Court.⁴

The second objection to the identification of Leontius the Monk with Cyril's Leontius is the description of him as 'superior' in the presence lists. D.B.Evans points out that the Prologue of the Contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos attributes the work to Leontius the Hermit.⁵

1. ACO 3, p.145.34; p.37.1; p.50.30. See also p.130.34; p.158.56; p.165.30.

2. Kyrillos, p.391.

3. Loofs, Leontius von Byzanz, pp. 261-273. See also 173.5-11; 176.7-15.

4. 176.15-20.

5. D.B.Evans, Leontius of Byzantium, p.8.

He refers to passages in which a hermit was described as a superior. A hermit Isidore signed himself as 'ἡγουμένος μονῆς ἰδίᾳς' at the fifth session of the 536 Synod, in a context which makes it clear that his monastery is a single cell.¹ He also refers to the jocular conversation between Sabas and Theodosius when Sabas claims priority because, since he has responsibility for hermits, he is 'ἡγουμένων... ἡγουμένος'.² This second passage is not applicable here since the point of Sabas' joke is that the word ἡγουμένος is normally used to apply to the leader of a group of monks and not to a hermit. The single example of Isidore the hermit is a slender basis for assuming that the designation ἡγουμένος refers to Leontius' solitary status. The title is more likely to refer to Leontius' position in 536. When the Synod met he had already been in Constantinople for five years. It is not improbable that a monk of his reputation, representing an influential group within Palestinian monasticism, should have been appointed to the charge of one of the numerous monasteries in Constantinople.

In the presence-lists of the 536 Synod, Leontius' name is included among the monks from Palestine. In addition to him, there are four monks from the Monastery of Theodosius, four from the Monastery of Martyrius, two from the Great Laura, three from the Laura of the Towers, four from the New Laura and one from the Laura of Firminus.³ Leontius is the only monk from Palestine whose name is not associated with any single monastery. Instead he is τοποτηρητῆς τῆς ἐρήμου παδῆς.⁴ This title fits Cyril's Leontius, a man who had close associations with the Palestinian desert, who had been part of a delegation to Constantinople, who had been in the capital too long to retain membership of a specific Palestinian monastery, and whose authority was accepted by the monks present in 536.

So there are no substantial objections to the identification of Leontius the representative of the Palestinian Origenists;

1. ACO 3, p.49.9-11.

2. 166.25.

3. See lists referred to above, p. 257-258.

4. ACO 3, p.158.29.

Leontius, the participant at Disputation and Synod; and Leontius the Hermit, author of theological works.¹ The Palestinian Origenists could look to a formidable leader to present their case at the capital. His death around 543 is not described by Cyril as a sign of God's intervention, but his removal from the scene was just as disastrous for the Origenists as was that of Nonnus.

The Origenist controversy was a struggle for power between two groups in the desert monasteries. During Sabas' life-time there was no doubt where power was located in the Jerusalem Church. By the popular acclaim of the monks, confirmed by Patriarchal appointment, Sabas and Theodosius were accepted as holding a joint authority over the monasteries dependent on the Holy City.² Their position was based on their close co-operation with the Patriarch and an influence at the Imperial Court.³

The two leaders died within a few years of each other - Theodosius in 529 and Sabas in 532. Sophronius, who became superior of Theodosius' monastery, proved to be a worthy successor. He increased the monastery buildings fourfold, built a new church, tripled the size of the community and ensured a sufficient annual revenue.⁴ But Sabas' successor, Melitas, was less effective. He was a weak leader who was unable to preserve the unity of the monastery, although Cyril gives no details about his failings.⁵

The partnership of two archimandrites, one for the coenobia and one for the laurae, was discontinued after the deaths of Sabas and Theodosius. Festugière, in his list of the archimandrites of Palestine, includes the names of Sophronius and Gelasius.⁶ Their inclusion is based on the request of Patriarch Peter that they should direct a libellus against Origen to the Emperor, but his choice of these monks rested not on their status as archimandrites but on the fact that they

1. Although the last identification is less secure.

2. 115.16-26.

3. These themes occur throughout the Lives of Cyril and Theodore of Petra's Life of Theodosius.

4. 240.20-241.3.

5. 188.3-6, 13-15.

6. MO 3/2, p.149.

were not members of the Origenist party.¹ The signature lists of the 536 Synod show a more uncertain situation. Domitian of the Monastery of Martyrius signed himself, 'πρεσβύτερος καὶ ἀρχιμανδρίτης μονῆς τοῦ μακαρίου Μαρτυρίου'; a certain Cyriac was 'πρεσβύτερος καὶ ἀρχιμανδρίτης λαύρας τῶν Πυργίων.² Hesychius, a monk of the Monastery of Theodosius, was also present representing Sophronius πρεσβυτέρου καὶ ἀρχιμανδρίτου τῆς αὐτῆς μονῆς (of Theodosius).³ The solidarity of the desert had been fragmented and no one delegate had the authority to speak for all monks. The title archimandrite seems to have been no longer a designation for a leader recognised by all monks and was being used in the more general sense of a superior. This led to a reduction in the strength of the monastic superiors. A sign of this was the appropriation by Patriarch Peter of money ear-marked by Sabas for the building of a fort for the protection of the monasteries. He distributed it directly to the monasteries, presumably in an attempt to build up his own support.⁴

The deaths of Sabas and Theodosius led to a fragmentation of power in the desert monasteries. Nonnus and Leontius did not hesitate to take advantage of the situation, and Nonnus emerged from his seclusion in the New Laura.⁵ Deaths were of significance in the Origenist controversy. Those of Sabas and Theodosius allowed the party to gain power. Those of Nonnus and Leontius led to its disintegration. As a result the alliance between the Great Laura and the Patriarch, with the support of the Emperor, was re-forged. The condemnation of Origenism at the Council of Constantinople confirmed the ascendancy of the group based at the Great Laura.⁶ The

1. 191.25-29. See MO 3/2, p.122.

2. ACO 3, p.50.

3. ACO 3, p.133.

4. 187.28-188.3.

5. 125.19-24; 188.15-17.

6. See Fr. Diekamp, Die Origenistischen Streitigkeiten, pp.66-138. He demonstrates that the Council rejected Origenism. Some authors have tried to rehabilitate the reputation of Origen by arguing that his writings were not condemned by an Ecumenical Council. A recent assessment is B.Drewery, 'The condemnation of Origen, should it be reversed?' in Origeniana Tertia ... the Third International Colloquium for Origen Studies, ed R.Hanson and H.Crouzel (Rome 1985) pp.271-277.

installation of Orthodox monks in the New Laura, among whom was Cyril of Scythopolis, completed the victory of the orthodox, ended the attempt to build a new power base among the monasteries - and concludes Cyril's Life of Sabas.¹

Origenism in sixth century Palestine was a title given to a party within the monastic desert. Its use did not necessarily imply the conscious acceptance of Origen's theological opinions. In the usage of the time, Origenism referred not so much to a dogmatic system as to a desire to have an intellectual basis for the ascetic life.² Because of the condemnation of certain of Origen's theological views as heretical (for example, at Alexandria in 400), the name 'Origenist' could be effectively used as an insult to attack a monk or group of monks who used allegorical methods to expound the Bible - and 'anthropomorphite' was an appropriate riposte.³ The ultimate destiny awaiting the monk after his death was a topic which naturally fascinated those who had renounced the secular world. They would naturally tend to speculation about the pre-existence of souls and the nature of the felicity to be enjoyed hereafter.

Cyril reports the claims of Origenist monks that speculation about these matters, as permitted by Gregory of Nazianzus, is harmless. Gregory had written: "In these subjects, to find the truth is not without profit, to make a mistake is without danger".⁴ This can be assumed to have been the view of the 'intellectuals' of the New Laura.⁵ Their attitude is summed up by A. Guillaumont: "En réalité, il ne faut pas se représenter ces moines comme des hérétiques conscients, cherchant à tenir secrètes leurs opinions par l'effort seulement d'une vulgaire prudence. Leur gnosticisme était bien plutôt un esprit de libre

1. 199.16-200.3.

2. For this comment, and an assessment of the nature of Origenism, see L. Perrone, La Chiesa di Palestina e le Controversie Christologiche (Brescia 1980) pp. 204-212; also B. Daley, 'The Origenism of Leontius of Byzantium', pp. 362-369.

3. A. Guillaumont, Les 'Kephalaia d'Evagre le Pontique, p. 83.

4. 229.24-31, referring to Gregory of Nazianzus in PG 36: 25.

5. 188.18; 230.3.

recherche vis-à-vis de certaines questions qui...restaient un objet d'investigation pour l'intelligence...Cependant la liberté d'esprit l'audace intellectuelle qu'ils estimaient légitimes chez le 'gnostique' étaient certainement associées en eux à un attachement réel à l'écriture, aux dogmes, à l'enseignement ecclésiastique traditionnel et à toutes les exigences d'un christianisme sincèrement professés".¹ This loose understanding of the nature of Origenism has been suggested as the background to the writings of Leontius of Byzantium, to account for the absence of any clearly recognisable and heterodox Origenist teaching.²

Within this generally speculative milieu, Cyril describes the emergence of a self-consciously Origenist group with a clear set of heretical opinions. This development took place after the death of Sabas.³ The nature of the teachings which they followed are suggested by the names given to the rival groups - the 'Protoktistoi' or Tetradites, and the 'Isochristoi'.⁴ The content of the doctrines of some of the Origenists is revealed in the summary of Origenist teaching given by Cyriac on the occasion of Cyril's visit to him.⁵ Whether the reported interview repeats the words of Cyriac or, as is indicated by the dependence of the text on the anathematisms of 553, whether it is an account constructed subsequently by Cyril, the form of Origenism attacked can be assumed to be that current in the later stages of the Origenist controversy.⁶

- 1, A.Guillaumont, Les 'Kephalaia Gnostica' d'Evagre le Pontique, pp.161-162.
2. B.Daley, 'The Origenism of Leontius of Byzantium', pp.362-369.
3. 188.15-24.
4. 197.10-18.
5. 230.2-22. This meeting is said to have taken place when Leontius was still alive (229.20-21), but this is hardly possible. We have already noted that Leontius died soon after the 543 Edict against Origen (192.20-22) and Cyril made this visit after he had entered the Monastery of Euthymius in 544 (229.7). The reference to Leontius should be discounted, and the visit dated to some time after 544, when Cyril entered Euthymius' monastery. and 547. when Nonnus died (229.20-22). Probably it should be dated after the death of Gelasius, when the influence of Origenism was at its zenith.
6. MH, pp.78-83; Guillaumont, Les 'Kephalaia Gnostica' d'Evagre le Pontique, p.151.

The studies of Diekamp and Guillaumont trace a development in Origenist thought between Justinian's 543 Edict against Origen and the 553 anathematisms issued by the Council of Constantinople.

The 543 anathemas are preceded by twenty-four extracts from the writings of Origen, consisting mainly of ideas drawn from the On First Principles. They refer to the Synodal Letter of the Egyptian Bishops in 400 and describe errors similar to those attacked earlier by Epiphanius. A difference between the 543 anathemas and the comments of Epiphanius is that the subordinationism of Origen is not mentioned in the later document. The anathemas describe how the logikoi originally formed a henad in union with the One and fell through satiety of contemplation. The logikoi were given bodies with a nature appropriate to the extent of their fall. The anathemas also condemned false views of the Resurrection.¹ The 543 anathemas represent a further attack, similar to those which had gone before, on commonplaces of Origenist thought. The teaching under consideration had not altered significantly from that which Epiphanius and others fought against in the fourth and early fifth centuries. Its emphasis on the pre-existence of souls suggests that the name Protoktistoi could appropriately be given to it. A possible interpretation of the disintegration of the Origenists described by Cyril is that these more conservative elements separated from the more radical Isochristoi and joined forces with the Orthodox of the Great Laura.²

The anathematisms of the 553 Ecumenical Council were intended to oppose substantially different beliefs. Whereas the 543 anathemas referred only to the teachings of Origen, by 553 the names of Evagrius and Didymus were included.³ The heretical opinions

1. See Guillaumont, Les 'Kephalaia Gnostica' d'Evagre le Pontique, pp.140-
2. 197.24-198.6. The reason for the alternative name of Tetradites is unclear. A sect which fasted on Easter Day and was condemned by the Council in Trullo (692) was called Tetradites. It has been suggested that this title could have been applied to the Origenist group for the same reason. See MO 3/2, p.127. A more likely explanation is that it was suspected that Origenist views on the Resurrection introduced a fourth element into the Holy Trinity.
3. 199.1-6. Compare Evagrius, HE 4.38 (Bidez 189.26-28). Also 186.28-33; 187.11-12. Other evidence for the association of these names with the Council is collected by Diekamp, Die Origenistischen Streitigkeiten, pp. 88-97 ; and Guillaumont,

which are proscribed are different from those rejected in 543. They include the idea that Christ was a nous who created the world and became incarnate, and who must be distinguished from the Word of God to which he was united. In the final resurrection or 'apokatastasis' the bodies of humans will be destroyed, and the logikoi with their spherical resurrection bodies will be equal to Christ and will reign with him. The emphasis both in the anathemas and in Justinian's letter to the Council is on the future of souls in the apokatastasis and their equality with Christ. These teachings are also the subject of the comments of Cyriac and the statement of Theodore Ascidas to the 553 Council.¹ These views are not to be found in the writings of Origen, but can be demonstrated to be derived from Evagrius' Kephalaia Gnostica.² According to Justinian's Letter to the Council they are the opinions of 'certain monks of Jerusalem'.³

This group should be identified with Cyril's 'Isochristoi', the name of which indicates an interest in the equality of souls with Christ in the apokatastasis. This group was based at the New Laura, the traditional pace-setter in Origenist speculation and was led by Theodore Ascidas.⁴ After the defection of the Protoktistoi, they remained in opposition. Their interest in the ideas of Evagrius' Kephalaia Gnostica was a novel element in the history of Palestinian Origenism. But its contribution was short-lived. It was condemned at the 553 Council of Constantinople and its adherents were driven out of the New Laura.

Les 'Kephalaia Gnostica' d'Evagre le Pontique, pp.136-139.
A part of Diekamp's argument is that the letter of Justinian to the Council, reproduced by George the Monk, a seventh century chronicler, was written in 553 - instead of in 543 as George says. The letter is to be found in the edition of M.Richard in REByz 28(1970)239-269.

1. 230.2-17. Evagrius, HE 4.38 (ed Bidez, p.189.26-29). For a discussion of the relationship between Cyriac's remarks and the 553 anathematisms, see Guillaumont, Les 'Kephalaia Gnostica' d'Evagre le Pontique, p.151. He considers that the presence of an extra item of heretical teaching in Cyriac's statement which is not found in the anathematisms eliminates the possibility of direct influence.
2. For verbal parallels between the anathemas and the Kephalaia Gnostica, see Guillaumont, Les 'Kephalaia Gnostica' d'Evagre le Pontique, pp.156-159.
3. See Fr. Diekamp, Die Origenistischen Streitigkeiten, p.84.
4. 197.16-198.1.

Origenism in sixth century Palestine arose because of divisions within the monasteries. The origin of the division was the increasing alienation of a group of monks of the Great Laura who valued their intellectual activity. After the death of Sabas, this group became more clearly defined as a result of the leadership given to it by Nonnus and Leontius, and developing theological opinions based increasingly on the writings of Evagrius. The existence of these three factors - the division in the monasteries, the theological teachings and the emergence of capable leadership - led to the crisis which culminated in the rejection of Origenism in 553.

7:5. Cyril's view of orthodoxy.

To the heresies of Nestorianism, Monophysitism and Origenism, Cyril opposes the pure teachings of the Council of Chalcedon, as refined by the Fifth Ecumenical Council of Constantinople and expounded by the theological writings of Justinian. The fullest statement which Cyril gives of his faith is the account of Euthymius' beliefs. The passage concerned is a summary of the Christological teaching of the 553 Council of Constantinople.¹ But in spite of the clarity and directness of this passage, and others like it, it gives the impression of being an intrusion into the work. They contain extensive use of quotation and read as though they are blocks of derived material inserted into the narrative. They do not strike the reader as theological statements discussed, debated and professed by the bulk of the monks of the desert.

The situation in the Egyptian monasteries described by P.Rousseau applies equally to Palestine. "The chief implications of our account so far must be that boundaries between religious groups were slow to form, rarely clear-cut and constantly adjusted. The variety of religious behaviour and belief should strike us most. Pachomius would have found the spiritual resources available to him amid this variety both abundant and confusing".² A conciliatory approach to heterodoxy is also to be found in Syrian monasteries. Jacob of Edessa reports that there were friendly relationships between the orthodox and heretical monks, and the order given by Rabbula that none of the heretics should be permitted to dwell in the monasteries presumably implies that they were. In his monastic rule, Philoxenus demands that doctrinal standards should be maintained. He attacks the style of asceticism which takes an eirenic stance in doctrinal matters and which prefers peace to an active participation in church affairs. His exhortation was provoked by the lack of rigour over doctrinal issues in the monasteries.³

1. 39.18-44.4. Compare Canons 3,4,7,8,12 and 14 of the Council's Decree against the Three Chapters, in ACO 4.1, pp.240-244. See also the parallels with Justinian in MH, pp.74-75.
2. P.Rousseau, Pachomius, p.28.
3. A.Vööbus, A History of Asceticism in the Syrian Orient, CSCO 184, Subsidia 14 and 17 (Louvain 1958,1960), pp.182-183.

Members of the church, and especially the monks, were ready to join enthusiastically in ecclesiastical conflict. Doctrinal partisan slogans were shouted out by delegates at Church Councils and by worshippers in the churches. But in these bitter struggles, doctrinal debate was not generally used to come to an agreement. Discussion of the nature of the Christian faith was not the most striking feature of the history of the period.

In an assessment of Origenism, M. Richard wrote: "In the Origenist struggles the heretics were not condemned for the views they held, but for the books they read".¹ He could have added that the description of heresy applied also to the company they kept. Orthodoxy as a title is a statement about a person's relationship to the church rather than a description of his theological opinions. When describing Euthymius' opponents after the Council of Chalcedon, Cyril chooses the term Aposchist (ἀποσχισταί).² This means 'cut off from', and points to what is most important to Cyril about their rebellion; not that they held mistaken views but that they were not in communion with the Patriarch. He describes the joyful scene when the rebels return to the fold of the church. "Reassured, all entered unanimously into the Holy City, resolved on unity with the Holy Church. The Archbishop welcomed them and ordered lights to be placed in the Church of the Holy Resurrection, and celebrated a public festival with the whole crowd of monks and citizens and there was great gaiety in the streets of Jerusalem for the joy of the union".³ There is a similar scene when Eudocia was reunited with the Patriarch. Here, after she has been reconciled with the Archbishop, she "received communion in the Catholic Church" (ἐκοινῶνησεν τῇ καθολικῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ).⁴

Sometimes the reconciled heretic was required to renounce his error, as in the case of the two Nestorians who had occupied Eudocia's Tower, but the act of communion remained the significant sign of their regained orthodoxy.⁵ The stories collected by John Moschus reveal a

1. M. Richard, 'Léonce de Byzance, était-il origéniste?', p. 35.

2. 47.7; 62.18; 63.21; 66.19. See also 115.11; 123.6; 154.26; 176.9; 219.13; 241.16.

3. 67.7-13.

4. 49.4.

5. 128.14-15.

similar approach. They include the experience of a noble lady, Cosmiana, who finds herself unable to enter the sanctuary of the Church of the Resurrection to venerate the tomb of Christ. She realises that this is because she is a Monophysite and asks the deacon to bring the chalice. After she has shared in the Orthodox Eucharist, she is able to venerate the Holy Place.¹ Another story tells of a monk who receives communion indiscriminately without ensuring that the Eucharist is that of the Chalcedonians. He is asked by an angel in a vision if he wants to be buried like the monks of Egypt or like those of Jerusalem. When he resolves to receive only the communion from the Chalcedonians, he is assured that he will not be condemned with the heretics.² These popular stories show the understanding of orthodoxy in the desert milieu which Cyril inhabits.

Orthodoxy is the faith of the Church. If you are in communion with the Church, you are by definition orthodox. If you are not in communion with the Church, you are a heretic. Monophysitism and Origenism were to be resisted not primarily because of their wrong beliefs, but because they brought division to the Church.

Cyril's writings are not intended to expound orthodox faith but to describe the growth of the orthodox Church.

1. John Moschus, Prat 48 (PG 87.3; 2904A-B).
2. John Moschus, Prat 178 (PG 87.3; 3048B-3049A).

Conclusion.

The monastic vocation is often understood in terms of renunciation. The demands of Christ's call to perfection were such that a total commitment was demanded from those who set out to fulfil them. By its nature this commitment could not be maintained amidst the distractions of the secular world. The act of going away, or ἀναχώρησις, was essential to the monastic movement. In his account of the origins of the monastic movement, H.Lietzmann wrote: "The feature that was characteristic of Antony's type was that he went away from human dwellings...He took the final step... He wandered 'across the river' into the boundless desert, and climbed into the mountains".¹ The call to the monastic life was the equivalent of the call to martyrdom, and the monk's departure from the world was like the martyr's sacrifice of his life. "If God will not remove him from the world by martyrdom, he can at least remove himself from the world by renouncing all that it contains".² The links between the church and secular society grew after the conversion of Constantine, and as a result the monk felt the need to renounce aspects of church life as well as secular life.³

The sheer brute fact of the existence of Jerusalem made it impossible for the monk of Judaea to imagine that he was leaving human society. His close proximity to the Holy Places reminded him continually of the truth of the Incarnation. The Christian faith is founded on events in history which took place at a specific location. The motivation for becoming a monk at Jerusalem was the conviction that, by inhabiting a particular place on earth, the monk was placed in contact with the heavenly world. Monastic renunciation meant not leaving society, but discovering a new society within the old.

1. H.Lietzmann, A History of the Early Church, 4 vols (London 1961) Vol IV, p.133.
2. E.Malone, 'The Monk and the Martyr', StA 38(1956)201-228 (p.212).
3. A motif running through John the Hesychast's life is the renunciation of the ἐπιβρασιον of the bishop to discover the ἐπιβρασιον of Christ.

Cyril of Scythopolis describes the building up of this society. It was a society of monks who had left their homeland to discover a new 'city'. Their responsibilities were to their monastic community, but also to the church, the city of Jerusalem and the Empire. They were inextricably bound up in the social, economic, military and religious life of Jerusalem, and so of the Byzantine Empire.¹

In this society the monks, the Patriarch of Jerusalem and the Emperor all had a part to play. A harmony and a common purpose bound them in their task to build up and preserve the Church, which had its centre at Jerusalem. The monks had played their part in preserving the orthodox faith, in ensuring the peace of the world through their prayers, as well as by extending their monastic society through the desert. Cyril's Lives finish by describing the final fulfilment of this aim. He was one of the monks who by their occupation of the New Laura were living witnesses to the triumph of orthodoxy. His dream had become reality.

The reality was not to last. One day in 614 the Persian army marched into Jerusalem. Between 33,000 and 67,000 inhabitants of Jerusalem were massacred.¹ Cyril's vision of the church died the same day, as a historical reality. But the task of building a godly society on earth has continued to challenge and inspire the Christian Church ever since. The monastic cities of Palestine are an important chapter in this enterprise.

1. The two numbers are given by different versions of Strategius' Capture of Jerusalem. See D.J.Chitty, The Desert a City (Oxford 1966) p.158.

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